

Edmund F. Bunker

1885



PASSAGES

FROM THE

DIARY OF A LATE PHYSICIAN.

WITH NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY THE EDITOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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NOTICE TO THE READER.

THE Editor hopes the event will prove, that he was not wrong in supposing the public would view with favour the reappearance of these "PASSAGES" in their present form. He was led to indulge such hopes, by seeing the flattering terms in which this Diary was mentioned, from time to time, by many respectable journals in London and elsewhere, during its successive appearance in BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE ; by the circumstance of its translation into the French language at Paris ; and by its republication separately in America, where the sale has been so extensive that the work is now stereotyped.

Several additional sketches were intended to have been inserted ; but this was found impracticable,

without extending the work to a third volume. Much new matter, however, will be found introduced in the notes, and the whole has been very carefully revised—although some errors have crept in after all, owing chiefly to the work's being printed in Edinburgh, while the Editor resided in London.

In conclusion, the Editor hopes these sketches may not unfrequently have succeeded in reaching the reader's heart, and pointing public attention to those pregnant scenes of interest and instruction which fall under the constant observation of the medical profession.

LONDON, *February 3.* 1832.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is somewhat strange, that a class of men who can command such interesting, extensive, and instructive materials, as the experience of most members of the medical profession teems with, should have hitherto made so few contributions to the stock of polite and popular literature. The Bar, the Church, the Army, the Navy, and the Stage, have all of them spread the volumes of their secret history before the prying gaze of the public ; while that of the MEDICAL PROFESSION has remained hitherto, with scarcely an exception, a sealed book. And yet there are no members of society whose pursuits lead them to listen more frequently to what has been exquisitely termed,

The still, sad music of humanity.

What instances of noble, though unostentatious, heroism—of calm and patient fortitude, under the most intoler-

able anguish that can wring and torture these poor bodies of ours ; what appalling combinations of moral and physical wretchedness, laying prostrate the proudest energies of humanity ; what diversified manifestations of character ; what singular and touching passages of domestic history, must have come under the notice of the intelligent practitioner of physic !—And are none of these calculated to furnish both instruction and entertainment to the public ? Why are we to be for ever shut out from these avenues to the most secret and profound knowledge of human nature ? Till the attempt was made, in the publication of this Diary, who has sunk a shaft into so rich a mine of incident and sentiment ?

Considerations such as these have led to the publication of this work, reprinted from the pages of BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE—a periodical which was the first to present similar papers to the public. Whether the Writer or Subject of them is dead or alive can be a matter of very consequence, it is apprehended, to the reader ; and no information, therefore, on that point, is requisite. It can scarcely be necessary to say, that the various names which have been pitched upon, in the papers, as those of the writer of this Diary, are *all* of them totally erroneous, and that it has, in particular, no claim whatever to the honourable names of “ Dr Gooch, Dr Armstrong,

or Dr Baillie.” It is respectfully suggested, that if the ensuing pages have no *intrinsic* claims to attention, the deficiency cannot be supplied by the most glittering appendages of name or title. *

In selecting from a copious store of sketches, in every instance drawn from nature—warm and vivid with the colouring of reality, all possible care has been taken to avoid undue disclosures, as far as that end could be obtained by the most scrupulous concealment of names, dates, and places. I cannot close these introductory remarks better, than in the words of the American Editor’s Preface to the stereotyped edition :—

* I have not often known of a piece of easier assurance than that of the French translator of these papers, who, not content with rendering them into French, has so paraphrased and misrepresented many of them, and especially the first, that I scarce knew them myself. He calls “ Early Struggles” *Le Jeune Docteur* ; and I am made to say at the commencement,—

“ Un Docteur d’*Edimbourg* (!) mort récemment, et dont je dois taire le nom, bien que cette précaution nécessaire puisse engager mes lecteurs à le confondre avec ses personnages fictifs dont les romanciers sont les créateurs,—ce Docteur, dont l’éducation avait été faite à Edimbourg, ville tout studieuse, et dont le talent s’était développé à Londres, a consigné, dans une série de *memoranda*, qui se trouvent entre mes mains, les observations morales, les incidens, les caractères, les tableaux domestiques, dont sa longue pratique lui à fourni les matériaux. Tout est réel dans ces souvenirs : ils ont les inconvéniens et les mérites que cette réalité entraîne,” &c.—*Souvenir d’un Médecin*, I.

The French reader is farther informed, that this paper appeared in *The Literary Gazette*.

“ These scenes, so well calculated to furnish both instruction and amusement, have been hitherto kept from public observation, as carefully as the Eleusinian mysteries were kept from the eyes of the vulgar. Access is occasionally given to the deathbed of some distinguished character,—Addison is seen instructing a profligate how a Christian can meet death ; and Dr Young, in his *Deathbed of Altamont*, has painted, in strong and lasting colours, the closing scene of one whose career too nearly resembled the profligate Warwick’s. But those in the humbler walks of life have been overlooked, as if men could be taught only by great examples.”

DIARY

OF

A LATE PHYSICIAN.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY STRUGGLES.

* * * CAN any thing be conceived more dreary and disheartening, than the prospect before a young London physician, who, without friends or fortune, yet with high aspirations after professional eminence, is striving to weave around him what is technically called "a connexion?" Such was my case. After having exhausted the slender finances allotted me from the funds of a poor but somewhat ambitious family, in passing through the usual routine of a college and medical education, I found myself, about my twenty-sixth year, in London,—possessed of about £ 100 in cash, a few books, a tolerable wardrobe, an inexhaustible fund of animal spirits, and a wife,—a lovely young creature whom I had been absurd enough some weeks before, to marry, merely because we loved each other. She was the only daughter of a very worthy fellow-townsmen of

mine, a widower ; whose fortunes, alas ! had decayed long before their possessor. Emily was the glory of his age, and, need I add, the pride of my youth ; and after having assiduously attended her father through his last illness, the sole and rich return was his daughter's heart.

I must own, that, when we found ourselves fairly housed in the mighty metropolis, with so poor an exchequer, and the means of replenishing it so remote and contingent, we were somewhat startled at the boldness of the step we had taken. " Nothing venture, nothing have," however, was my maxim ; and I felt supported by that unaccountable conviction which clings to all in such circumstances as mine, up to the very pinching moment, but no longer, that there *must* be thousands of ways of getting a livelihood, to which one can turn at a moment's warning. And then the swelling thought of being the architect of one's own fortune ! As, however, daily drafts began to diminish my £ 100, my spirits faltered a little. I discovered that I might indeed as well

Lie pack'd in mine own grave,

as continue in London without money, or the means of getting it ; and after revolving endless schemes, the only conceivable mode of doing so seemed calling in the *generous* assistance of the Jews. My father had fortunately effected a policy on my life for £ 5000, at an early period, on which some fourteen premiums had been paid ; and this available security, added to the powerful influence of a young nobleman to whom I had rendered some service at college, enabled me to succeed in wringing a loan, from old Amos L——, of £ 3000, at the trifling

interest of fifteen per cent., payable by way of redeemable annuity. It was with fear and trembling that I called myself master of this large sum, and with the utmost diffidence that I could bring myself to exercise what the lawyers would call *acts of ownership* on it. As, however, there was no time to lose, I took a respectable house in C—— Street West * —furnished it neatly and respectably—fortunately enough let the first floor to a rich old East India bachelor—beheld “Dr ——” glisten conspicuously on my door†—and then dropped my little line into the great water of London, resolved to abide the issue with patience.

Blessed with buoyant and sanguine spirits, I did not lay it much to heart, that my only occupation during the first six months, was—abroad, to practise the pardonable solecism of hurrying *haud passibus æquis* through the streets, as if in attendance on numerous patients; and at home, to ponder pleasantly over my books, and enjoy the company of my cheerful and affectionate wife. But when I had numbered twelve months, almost without feeling a pulse or receiving a fee, and was reminded by old L——, that the second half-yearly instalment of £225 was due, I began to look forward with some apprehension to the overcast future. Of the £3000, for the use of which I was paying so cruel and exorbitant a premium, little more than half remained—and this, notwithstanding we had practised the most rigid economy in

* “On sait que la partie *Est* de Londres est réservée aux gens de commerce ; et que l’*Ouest* de la même ville est habité par l’aristocratie.”—*Note of the French Translator.*

† “Ces plaques de cuivre, portant le nom du propriétaire ou du principal locataire, se trouvent sur toutes les portes.”—*Ib.*

our household expenditure, and devoted as little to dress as was compatible with maintaining a respectable exterior. To my sorrow, I found myself unavoidably contracting debts, which, with the interest due to old L——, I found it would be impossible to discharge. If matters went on as they seemed to threaten, what was to become of me in a year or two? Putting every thing else out of the question, where was I to find funds to meet old L——'s annual demand of £450? Relying on my prospects of professional success, I had bound myself to return the £3000 within five years of the time of borrowing it; and now I thought I must have been mad to do so. If my profession failed me, I had nothing else to look to. I had no family resources—for my father had died since I came to London, very much embarrassed in his circumstances; and my mother, who was aged and infirm, had gone to reside with some relatives, who were few and poor. My wife, as I have stated, was in like plight. I do not think she had a relative in England, (for her father and all his family were Germans,) except

— him, whose brightest joy

Was, that he called her—wife.

Lord ——, the nobleman before mentioned, who I am sure would have rejoiced in assisting me, either by pecuniary advances or professional introductions, had been on the continent ever since I commenced practice. Being of studious habits, and a very bashful and reserved disposition while at Cambridge, I could number but few college friends, none of whom I knew where to find in London. Neither my wife nor I knew more than five people, besides our Indian lodger; for, to tell

the truth, we were, like many a fond and foolish couple before us, all the world to one another, and cared little for scraping together promiscuous acquaintance. If we had even been inclined to visiting, our straitened circumstances would have forbid our incurring the expenses attached to it. What then was to be done? My wife would say, "Poh, love, we shall contrive to get on as well as our neighbours;" but the simple fact was, we were not getting on like our neighbours, nor did I see any prospect of our ever doing so. I began, therefore, to pass sleepless nights and days of despondency, casting about in every direction for any employment consistent with my profession, and redoubling my fruitless efforts to obtain practice.

It is almost laughable to say, that our only receipts were a few paltry guineas, sent at long intervals from old Mr Asperne, the proprietor of the European Magazine, as remuneration for a sort of monthly medical summary with which I furnished him, and a trifle or two from Mr Nicholls of the Gentleman's Magazine, as an acknowledgment for several sweet sonnets sent by my wife.

Knowing the success which often attended professional authorship, as tending to acquire for the writer a reputation for skill on the subject of which he treated, and introduce him to the notice of the higher members of his own profession, I determined to turn my attention that way. For several months I was up early and late, at a work on Diseases of the Lungs. I bestowed incredible pains on it; and my toil was sweetened by my wife, who would sit by me in the long summer evenings like an angel, consoling and encouraging me with predictions of success. She lightened my la-

hour by undertaking the transcription of the manuscript; and I thought that two or three hundred sheets of fair and regular handwriting were heavily purchased by the impaired eyesight of the beloved amanuensis. When at length it was completed, having been read and revised twenty times, so that there was not a comma wanting, I hurried, full of fluttering hopes and fears, to a well-known medical bookseller, expecting he would at once purchase the copy-right. Fifty pounds I had fixed in my own mind as the minimum of what I would accept; and I had already appropriated some little part of it towards buying a handsome silk dress for my wife. Alas! even in this branch of my profession, my hopes were doomed to meet with disappointment. The bookseller received me with great civility; listened to every word I had to say; seemed to take some interest in my new views of the disease treated of, which I explained to him, and repeated—and ventured to assure him, that they would certainly attract public attention. My heart leaped for joy as I saw his business-like eye settled upon me with an expression of attentive interest. After having almost talked myself hoarse, and flushed myself all over with excitement, he removed his spectacles, and politely assured me of his approbation of the work; but that he had determined never to publish any more medical books on his own account. I have the most vivid recollection of almost turning sick with chagrin. With a faltering voice I asked him if that was his unalterable determination? He replied, it was; for he had “lost too much by speculations of that sort.” I tied up the manuscript, and withdrew. As soon as I left his shop, I let fall a scorching tear of mingled sorrow and morti-

fication. I could almost have wept aloud. At that moment, whom should I meet but my dear wife ; for we had both been talking all night long, and all breakfast time, about the probable result of my interview with the bookseller ; and her anxious affection would not permit her to wait my return. She had been pacing to and fro on the other side of the street, and flew to me on my leaving the shop. I could not speak to her ; I felt almost choked. At last her continued expressions of tenderness and sympathy soothed me into a more equable frame of mind, and we returned to dinner. In the afternoon, I offered it to another bookseller, who, John Trot like, told me at once he “ never did that sort of thing.” I offered it subsequently to every medical bookseller I could find—with like success. One fat fellow snuffed out, “ If he might make so bold,” he would advise me to leave off book-making, and stick to my practice ; another assured me he had got two similar works then in the press ; and the last I consulted, told me I was too young, he thought, to have seen enough of practice for writing “ a book of that nature,” as his words were. “ Publish it on your own account, love,” said my wife. That, however, was out of the question, whatever might be the merits of the work —for I had no funds ; and a kind-hearted bookseller, to whom I mentioned the project, assured me that, if I went to press, my work would fall from it still-born. When I returned home from making this last attempt, I flung myself into a chair by the fireside, opposite my wife, without speaking. There was an anxious smile of sweet solicitude in her face. My agitated and mortified air convinced her that I was finally disappointed, and that six months’ hard la-

hour were thrown away. In a fit of uncontrollable pique and passion, I flung the manuscript on the fire; but Emily suddenly snatched it from the flames, gazed on me with a look such as none but a fond and devoted wife could give—threw her arms round my neck, and kissed me back to calmness, if not happiness. I laid the manuscript in question on a shelf in my study; and it was my first and last attempt at medical book-making.

From what cause, or combination of causes, I know not, but I seemed marked out for failure in my profession. Though my name shone on my door, and the respectable neighbourhood could not but have noticed the regularity and decorum of my habits and manners, yet none ever thought of calling me in! Had I been able to exhibit a line of carriages at my door, or open my house for the reception of company, or dash about town in an elegant equipage, or be seen at the opera and theatres—had I been able to do this, the case might have been different. In candour I must acknowledge, that another probable cause of my ill success was a somewhat insignificant person, and unprepossessing countenance. I could not wear such an eternal smirk of conceited complacency, or keep my head perpetually bowing, mandarin like, as many of my professional brothers. Still there were thousands to whom these deficiencies proved no serious obstacles. The great misfortune in my case was, undoubtedly, the want of introductions. There was a man of considerable rank and great wealth, who was a sort of fiftieth cousin of mine, resided in one of the fashionable squares not far from me, and on whom I had called to claim kindred, and solicit his patronage; but after having sent up my name and address, I was

suffered to wait so long in an anteroom, that, what with this and the noise of servants bustling past with insolent familiarity, I quite forgot the relationship, and left the house, wondering what had brought me there. I never felt inclined to go near it again; so there was an end of all prospects of introduction from that quarter. I was left, therefore, to rely exclusively on my own efforts, and trust to chance for patients. It is true, that in the time I have mentioned, I was twice called in at an instant's warning; but in both cases, the objects of my visits had expired before my arrival, probably before a messenger could be despatched for me; and the manner in which my fees were proffered, convinced me that I should be cursed for a mercenary wretch if I accepted them. I was, therefore, induced in each case to decline the guinea, though it would have purchased me a week's happiness! I was, also, on several occasions, called in to visit the inferior members of families in the neighbourhood—servants, housekeepers, porters, &c.; and of all the trying, the mortifying occurrences in the life of a young physician, such occasions as these are the most irritating. You go to the house—a large one probably—and are instructed not to knock at the front door, but to go down by the area to your patient!

I think it was about this time that I was summoned in haste to young Sir Charles F——, who resided near Mayfair. Delighted at the prospect of securing so distinguished a patient, I hurried to his house, resolved to do my utmost to give satisfaction. When I entered the room, I found the sprig of fashion enveloped in a crimson silk dressing-gown, sitting conceitedly on the sofa, and sipping a cup of coffee, from which he desisted a mo-

ment to examine me—positively—through his eye-glass, and then directed me to inspect the swelled foot of a favourite pointer ! Darting a look of anger at the insulting coxcomb, I instantly withdrew without uttering a word. *Five years* afterwards, did that young man make use of the most strenuous efforts to oust me from the confidence of a family of distinction, to which he was distantly related *.

A more mortifying incident occurred shortly afterwards. I had the misfortune to be called on a sudden emergency into consultation with the late celebrated Dr ——. It was the first consultational visit that I had ever paid ; and I was, of course, very anxious to acquit myself creditably. Shall I ever forget the air of insolent condescension with which he received me ; or the remark he made in the presence of several individuals, professional as well as unprofessional—“ I assure you, Dr —, there is *really* some difference between apoplexy and epilepsy, at least there was when I was a young man !” He accompanied these words with a look of supercilious commiseration, directed to the lady whose husband was our patient ; and I need

* This anecdote calls to my mind one told me by the late Dr James Hamilton. He was sent for once in great haste by Lady P——, to see—absolutely a little favourite *monkey*, which was almost suffocated with its morning feed. When the doctor entered the room, he saw only her Ladyship, her young son, (a lad of ten years old, who was most absurdly dressed,) and his patient. Looking at each of the two latter, he said coolly to Lady P——, “ My Lady, *which* is the monkey ? ” —[I am made to say in French, “ ‘ Madame,’ dit-il, ‘ Messieurs vos fils n’ont qu’à faire diète et à boire du thé.’ Il s’en alla aussitôt.” And farther, the name of *Abernethy* is coolly substituted for that of Dr Hamilton !]

not add, that my future services were dispensed with ! My heart ached to think, that such a fellow as this should have it in his power to take, as it were, the bread out of the mouth of an unpretending, and almost spirit-broken, professional brother ; but I had no remedy. I am happy to have it in my power to say how much the tone of consulting physicians is now (1820) lowered towards their brethren who may happen to be of a few years' less standing, and, consequently, less firmly fixed in the confidence of their patients. It was by a few similar incidents to those above related, that my spirit began to be soured ; and had it not been for the unvarying sweetness and cheerfulness of my incomparable wife, existence would not have been tolerable. My professional efforts were paralysed ; failure attended every attempt ; my ruin seemed sealed. My resources were rapidly melting away—my expenditure, moderate as it was, was counterbalanced by no incomings. A prison and starvation scowled before me.

Despairing of finding any better source of emolument, I was induced to send an advertisement to one of the daily papers, stating, that “ a graduate of Cambridge University, having a little spare time at his disposal, was willing to give private instructions in the classics, in the evenings, to gentlemen preparing for college, or to others ! ” After about a week's interval, I received one solitary communication. It was from a young man holding some subordinate situation under government, and residing at Pimlico. This person offered me two guineas a-month, if I would attend him *at his own house*, for two hours, on the evenings of Monday, Wednesday, and Friday ! With these hard terms was I

obliged to comply—yes, a gentleman, and a member of an English University, was driven so low as to attend, for these terms, an ignorant underling, and endeavour to instil a few drops of classic lore into the turbid and shallow waters of his understanding. I had hardly given him a month's attendance before he assured me, with a flippant air, that, as he had now acquired "a practical knowledge of the classics," he would dispense with my farther services! Dull dunce! he could not, in Latin, be brought to comprehend the difference between a neuter and an active verb; while, as for Greek, it was an absolute chokepear; so he nibbled on to *τιμή*—and then gave it up. Bitter but unavailing were my regrets, as I returned from paying my last visit to this promising scholar, that I had not entered the army, and gone to America, or even betaken myself to some subordinate commercial situation. A thousand and a thousand times did I curse the ambition which brought me up to London, and the egregious vanity which led me to rely so implicitly on my talents for success. Had I but been content with the humbler sphere of a general practitioner, I might have laid out my dearly bought L. 3000 with a reasonable prospect of soon repaying it, and acquiring a respectable livelihood. But all these sober thoughts, as is usual, came only time enough to enhance the mortification of failure.

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About L. 300 was now the miserable remnant of the money borrowed from the Jew; and half a year's interest, (L. 225,) together with my rent, was due in about a fortnight's time. I was, besides, indebted to many tradesmen—who were becoming every day more que-

rulous—for articles of food, clothing, and furniture. My poor Emily was in daily expectation of her accouchement ; and my own health was sensibly sinking, under the combined pressure of anxiety and excessive parsimony. What was to be done ? Despair was clinging to me, and shedding blight and mildew over all my faculties. Every avenue was closed against me. I never knew what it was to have more than one or two hours' sleep at night, and that so heavy, so troubled, and interrupted, that I awoke each morning more dead than alive. I lay tossing in bed, revolving all conceivable schemes and fancies in my tortured brain, till at length, from mere iteration, they began to assume a feasible aspect ; alas ! however, they would none of them bear the blush of daylight, but faded away as extravagant and absurd. I would endeavour to set afloat a popular Medical Journal—to give lectures on diseases of the lungs (a department with which I was familiar)—I would advertise for a small medical partnership, as a general practitioner—I would do a thousand things of the sort ; but where was my capital to set out with ? I had L.300 in the world, and L.450 yearly to pay to an extortionating old miser ; that was the simple fact ; and it almost drove me to despair to advert to it for one instant. Wretched, however, as I was, and almost every instant loathing my existence, the idea of suicide was never entertained for a moment. If the fiend would occasionally flit across the dreary chamber of my heart, a strong, an unceasing confidence in the goodness and power of my Maker always repelled the fearful visitant. Even yet, rapidly as I seemed approaching the precipice of ruin, I could not avoid cherishing a feeble hope that

some unexpected avenue would open to better fortune ; and the thought of it would, for a time, soothe my troubled breast, and nerve it to bear up against the inroads of my present misfortunes.

I recollect sitting down one day in St James's Park, on one of the benches, weary with wandering the whole morning, I knew not whither. I felt faint and ill, and more than usually depressed in mind. I had that morning paid one of my tradesmen's bills, amounting to L.10 ; and the fellow told my servant, that, as he had so much trouble in getting his money, he did not want the honour of my custom any longer. The thought that my credit was failing in the neighbourhood was insupportable. Ruin and disgrace would then be accelerated ; and being unable to meet my creditors, I should be proclaimed little less than a swindler, and shaken like a viper from the lap of society. Fearful as were such thoughts, I had not enough of energy of feeling left to suffer much agitation from them. I folded my arms on my breast in sullen apathy, and wished only that, whatever might be my fate, certainty might be substituted for suspense.

While indulging in thoughts like these, a glittering troop of soldiers passed by me, preceded by their band, playing a merry air. How the sounds jarred on the broken strings of my heart ! And many a bright face, dressed in smiles of gaiety and happiness, thronged past, attracted by the music, little thinking of the wretchedness of him who was sitting by ! I could not prevent the tears of anguish from gushing forth. I thought of Emily—of her delicate and interesting, but, to me, melancholy situation. I could not bear the thought of re-

turning home, to encounter her affectionate looks—her meek and gentle resignation to her bitter fortunes. Why had I married her, without first having considered whether I could support her? Passionately fond of me, as I well knew she was, could she avoid frequently recurring to the days of our courtship, when I reiteratedly assured her of my certainty of professional success as soon as I could get settled in London? Where now were all the fair and flourishing scenes to which my childish enthusiasm had taught me to look forward? Would not the bitter contrast she was now experiencing, and seemed doomed long yet to experience, alienate from me a portion of her affections, and induce feelings of anger and contempt? Could I blame her for all this? If the goodly superstructure of my fortunes fell, was it not I that had loosened and destroyed the foundation?—Reflections like these were harassing and scourging me, when an elderly gentleman, evidently an invalid, tottered slowly to the bench where I was sitting, and sat down beside me. He seemed a man of wealth and consideration: for his servant, on whose arm he had been leaning, and who now stood behind the bench on which he was sitting, wore a very elegant livery. He was almost shaken to pieces by an asthmatic cough, and was besides suffering from another severe disorder, which need not be more particularly named. He looked at me once or twice, in a manner which seemed to say, that he would not take it rudely if I addressed him. I did so. “I am afraid, sir,” I said, “you are in great pain from that cough?”—“Yes,” he gasped faintly; “and I don’t know how to get rid of it. I am an old man, you see, sir; and methinks

my summons to the grave might have been less loud and painful." After a little pause, I ventured to ask him how long he had been subject to the cough which now harassed him ? He said, more or less, for the last ten years ; but that, latterly, it had increased so much upon him, that he could not derive any benefit from medical advice. " I should think, sir, the more violent symptoms of your disorder might be mitigated," said I, and proceeded to question him minutely, but hesitatingly, as to the origin and progress of the complaints which now afflicted him. He answered all my questions with civility ; and, as I went on, seemed to be roused into something like curiosity and interest. I need not say more, than that I discovered he had not been in the hands of a skilful practitioner ; and that I assured him very few and simple means would give him great relief from at least the more violent symptoms. He, of course, perceived I was in the medical profession ; and after some apparent hesitation, evidently as to whether or not I should feel hurt, tendered me a guinea. I refused it promptly and decidedly, and assured him that he was quite welcome to the very trifling advice I had rendered him. At that moment, a young man of fashionable appearance walked up, and told him their carriage was waiting at the corner of the Stable-yard. This last gentleman, who seemed to be either the son or nephew of the old gentleman, eyed me, I thought, with a certain superciliousness, which was not lessened when the invalid told him I had given him some excellent advice, for which he could not prevail on me to receive a fee. " We are vastly obliged to you, sir ; but are going home to the family physician," said the young

man, haughtily ; and, placing the invalid's arm in his led him slowly away. He was addressed several times by the servant as "*Sir*" something, *Wilton* or *William*, I think ; but I could not distinctly catch it, so that it was evidently a person of some rank I had been addressing. How many there are, thought I, that, with a more plausible and insinuating address than mine is, would have contrived to get into the confidence of this gentleman, and become his medical attendant ! How foolish was I not to give him my card when he proffered me a *fec*, and thus, in all probability, be sent for the next morning to pay a regular professional visit ! and to what lucrative introductions might not that have led ! A thousand times I cursed my diffidence—my sensitiveness as to professional etiquette—and my inability to seize the advantages occasionally offered by a fortunate conjuncture of circumstances. I was fitter, I thought, for La Trappe than the bustling world of business. I deserved my ill fortune ; and professional failure was the natural consequence of the *mauvaise honte* which has injured so many. As the day, however, was far advancing, I left the seat, and turned my steps towards my cheerless home.

As was generally the case, I found Emily busily engaged in painting little fire-screens, and other ornamental toys, which, when completed, I was in the habit of carrying to a kind of private bazaar in Oxford Street, where I was not known, and where, with an aching heart, I disposed of the delicate and beautiful productions of my poor wife, for a trifle hardly worth taking home. Could any man, pretending to the slightest feeling, contemplate his young wife, far advanced in preg-

nancy, in a critical state of health, and requiring air, exercise, and cheerful company, toiling, in the manner I have related, from morning to night, and for a miserably inadequate remuneration? She submitted, however, to our misfortunes, with infinitely more firmness and equanimity than I could pretend to ; and her uniform cheerfulness of demeanour, together with the passionate fervour of her fondness for me, contributed to fling a few rays of trembling and evanescent lustre over the gloomy prospects of the future. Still, however, the dreadful question incessantly presented itself,—What, in Heaven's name, is to become of us ? I cannot say that we were at this time in absolute literal want ; though our parsimonious fare hardly deserved the name of food, especially such as my wife's delicate situation required. It was the hopelessness of all *prospective* resources that kept us in perpetual thralldom. With infinite effort, we might contrive to hold on to a given period,—say, till the next half-yearly demand of old L—— ; and then we must sink altogether, unless a miracle intervened to save us. Had I been alone in the world, I might have braved the worst, have turned my hands to a thousand things, have accommodated myself to almost any circumstances, and borne the extremest privations with fortitude. But my darling—my meek, smiling, gentle, Emily !—my heart bled for her.

Not to leave any stone unturned, seeing an advertisement addressed, “ To Medical Men,” I applied for the situation of assistant to a general practitioner, though I had but little skill in the practical part of compounding medicines. I applied personally to the advertiser, a fat, red faced, vulgar fellow, who had con-

trived to gain a very large practice, by what means God only knows. His terms were,—and these named in the most offensive contemptuousness of manner,—L.80 a-year, board and lodge out, and give *all* my time in the day to my employer ! Absurd as was the idea of acceding to terms like these, I thought I might still consider them. I pressed hard for L.100 a-year, and told him I was married——

“ Married !” said he, with a loud laugh ; “ No, no, sir, you are not the man for my money ; so I wish you good morning *.”

Thus was I baffled in every attempt to obtain a permanent source of support from my profession. It brought me about £ 40 per annum. I gained, by occasional contributions to magazines, an average sum annually of about £ 25. My wife earned about that sum by her pencil. And these were all the funds I had to meet the enormous interest due half-yearly to old L——, to discharge my rent, and the various other expenses of house-keeping, &c. Might I not well despair ? I did ; and God’s goodness only preserved me from the frightful calamity which has suddenly terminated the earthly miseries of thousands in similar circumstances.

And is it possible, I often thought, with all the tormenting credulousness of a man half stupified with his misfortunes,—is it possible, that, in the very heart of this metropolis of splendour, wealth, and extravagance, a gentleman and a scholar, who has laboured long in the honourable toil of acquiring professional knowledge, cannot contrive to scrape together even a competent sub-

* This worthy, (a Mr C—— by name), lived at this time in the region of St George’s in the East.

sistence ? and that, too, while ignorance and infamy are wallowing in wealth,—while charlatanry and quackery of all kinds are bloated with success ! Full of such thoughts as these, how often have I slunk stealthily along the streets of London, on cold and dreary winter evenings, almost fainting with long abstinence, yet reluctant to return home and incur the expense of an ordinary family dinner, while my wife's situation required the most rigorous economy to enable us to meet, even in a poor and small way, the exigencies of her approaching accouchement ! How often—ay, hundreds of times—have I envied the coarse and filthy fare of the minor eating-houses, and been content to interrupt a twelve hours' fast with a bun or biscuit, and a draught of water or turbid table-beer, under the wretched pretence of being in too great a hurry to go home to dinner ! I have often gazed with envy—once, I recollect, in particular—on dogs eating their huge daily slice of boiled horse's flesh, and envied their contented and satiated looks ! With what anguish of heart have I seen carriages setting down company at the door of a house, illuminated by the glare of a hundred tapers, where were ladies dressed in the extreme of fashion, whose cast off clothes would have enabled me to acquire a tolerably respectable livelihood ! Oh ! ye sons and daughters of luxury and extravagance, how many thousands of needy and deserving families would rejoice to eat of the crumbs which fall from your tables, and they may not !

I have stood many a time at my parlour window, and envied the kitchen fare of the servants of my wealthy opposite neighbour ; while I protest I have been ashamed

to look our own servant in the face, as she, day after day, served up for two, what was little more than sufficient for one : and yet, bitter mockery ! I was to support abroad the farce of a cheerful and respectable professional exterior.

* * * * *

Two days after the occurrence at St James's Park, above related, I was, as usual, reading the columns of advertisements in one of the daily papers, when my eyes lit on the following :—

“ The professional gentleman, who, a day or two ago, had some conversation on the subject of asthma, with an *invalid*, on one of the benches of St James's Park, is particularly requested to forward his name and address to W. J., care of Messrs ——.”

I almost let the paper fall from my hands with delighted surprise. That I was the “professional gentleman” alluded to, was clear ; and on the slender foundation of this advertisement, I had, in a few moments, built a large and splendid superstructure of good fortune. I had hardly calmness enough to call my wife, who was engaged with some small household matters, for the purpose of communicating the good news to her. I need hardly say, with what eagerness I complied with the requisitions of the advertisement. Half an hour beheld my name and address in an envelope, with the superscription, “ W. J.” lying at Messrs ——’s, who were stationers. After passing a most anxious and sleepless night, agitated by all kinds of hopes and fears, my wife and I were sitting at breakfast, when a livery servant knocked at the door ; and, after inquiring whether “ Dr ——” was at home, left a letter. It was an envelope,

containing the card of address of Sir William, No. 26. — Street, accompanied with the following note :—

“ Sir William ——’s compliments to Dr ——, and will feel obliged by his looking in in the course of the morning.”

“ Now, be calm my dear ——,” said Emily, as she saw my fluttering excitement of manner. But, alas ! that was impossible. I was impatient for the hour of twelve ; and precisely as the clock struck, I sallied forth to visit my titled patient. All the way I went, I was taxing my ingenuity for palliatives, remedies for asthma : I would new-regulate his diet and plan of life,—in short, I would do wonders !

Sir William, who was sitting gasping by the fireside, received me with great courtesy ; and after motioning his niece, a charming young woman, to retire, told me, he had been so much interested by my remarks the other day, in the Park, that he felt inclined to follow my advice, and put himself under my care altogether. He then entered on a history of his complaints. I found his constitution was entirely broken up, and that in a very little it must fall to pieces. I told him, however, that if he would adhere strictly to the regimen I proposed, I could promise him great if not permanent relief. He listened to what I said with the utmost interest. “ Do you think you could prolong my life, Doctor, for two years ?” said he, with emotion. I told him, I certainly could not pretend to promise him so much. “ My only reason for asking the question,” he replied, “ is my beloved niece, that young lady, who has just left us. If I cannot live for two years or eighteen months longer, it will be a bitter thing for her !”—He sighed

deeply, and added abruptly,—“ But of that more hereafter. I hope to see you to-morrow, Doetor.” He insisted on my accepting five guineas, in return for the *two* visits he said he had received ; and I took my departure. I felt altogether a new man, as I walked home. My spirits were more light and buoyant than they had been for many a long month ; for I could not help thinking, that I had now a fair chance of introduction into respectable practice. My wife shared my joy ; and we were as happy for the rest of that day, as if we had already surmounted the heavy difficulties which oppressed us.

I attended Sir William every day that week, and received a fee of two guineas for each visit. On Sunday I met the family physician, Sir ——, who had just been released from attendance on one of the royal family. He was a polite, but haughty man ; and seemed inclined to be much displeased with Sir William for calling me in. When I entered, Sir William introduced me to him as “ Dr ——.” “ Dr ——, of —— Square ?” inquired the other physician, carelessly. I told him where I lived. He affected to be reflecting where the street was ; it was the one next to that in which he himself resided. There is nothing in the world so easy, as for the eminent members of our profession to take the bread out of the mouths of their younger brethren, with the best grace in the world. So Sir —— contrived in the present case. He assured Sir William, that nothing was calculated to do him so much good, as change of air—of course, I could not but assent. The sooner, he said, Sir William left town the better ; Sir William asked me if I concurred in that opinion ?—Certainly. He set

off for Worthing two days after ; and I lost the best, and almost the only patient I had then ever had ; for Sir William died after three weeks' residence at Worthing.

This circumstance occasioned me great depression of spirits. Nothing that I touched seemed to prosper ; and the transient glimpses I occasionally obtained of good fortune, seemed given only to tantalize me, and enhance the bitterness of the contrast. My store of money was reduced at last from £ 3000 to £ 25 in cash ; my debts amounted to upwards of £ 100 ; and in six months, another £ 225 would be due to old L—— ! My wife, too, had been confined, and there was another source of expense ; for both she and my little daughter were in a very feeble state of health. Still, sweetly wishful to accommodate herself to one lowered in circumstances, she almost broke my heart one day with the proposal of dismissing our servant, the whole of whose labour my poor sweet Emily herself undertook to perform ! No, no—this was too much ; the tears of agony gushed from my eyes, as I folded her delicate frame in my arms, and assured her that Providence would never permit so much virtue and gentleness to be degraded into such humiliating servitude. I *said* this ; but my heart heavily misgave me, that a more wretched prospect was before her !

I have often sat by my small, solitary parlour fire, and pondered over our misery and misfortunes, till almost frenzied with the violence of my emotions. Where was I to look for relief ? What earthly remedy was there ? O my God ! thou alone knowest what this poor heart of mine suffered in such times as these, not on my own account, but for those beloved beings whose ruin

was implicated in mine ! What, however, was to be done at the present crisis, seeing, at Christmas, old L—— would come upon me for his interest, and my other creditors would insist on payment ? A dreary mist came over my mind's eye whenever I attempted to look steadily forward into futurity. I had written several times to my kind and condescending friend, Lord ——, who still continued abroad ; but as I knew not to what part of the Continent to direct, and the servants of his family pretended they knew not, I left my letters at his town house, to be forwarded with his quarterly packages. I suppose my letters must have been opened, and burnt, as little other than pestering, begging letters ; for I never heard from him.

I had often heard from my father, that we had a sort of fiftieth cousin in London, a baronet of great wealth, who had married a distant relation of our family, on account solely of her beauty ; but that he was one of the most haughty and arrogant men breathing—had, in the most insolent manner, disavowed the relationship, and treated my father, on one occasion, very contumeliously ; a fate I had myself shared, as the reader may recollect, not long ago *. Since then, however, the pressure of accumulated misfortunes had a thousand times forced upon me the idea of once more applying to this man, and stating my circumstances. As one is easily induced to believe what one *wishes* to be true, I could not help thinking that surely he must in some degree relent, if informed of our utter misery : but my heart always failed when I took my pen in hand to write to him. I was at a loss for terms in which to state our distress most feelingly,

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and in a manner best calculated to arrest his attention. I had, however, after infinite reluctance, addressed a letter of this sort to his lady ; who, I am sorry to say, shared all Sir ——'s *hauteur* ; and received an answer from a fashionable watering-place, where her ladyship was spending the summer months. This is it :—

“ Lady ——'s compliments to Dr ——, and having received his letter, and given it her best consideration, is happy in being able to request Dr ——'s acceptance of the enclosed ; which, however, owing to Sir ——'s temporary embarrassment in pecuniary matters, she has had some difficulty in sending. She is, therefore, under the painful necessity of requesting Dr —— to abstain from future applications of this sort. As to Dr ——'s offer of his medical services to Lady ——'s family, when in town, Lady —— must beg to decline them, as the present physician has attended the family for years, and neither Lady —— nor Sir —— see any reason for changing.

“ W——, to Dr ——.”

The enclosure was £10, which I was on the point of returning in a blank envelope, indignant at the cold and unfeeling letter which accompanied it ; but the pale sunk cheeks of my wife appealed against my pride, and I retained it. To return. Recollecting the reception of this application, as well as my former visit to Sir ——, my heart froze at the very idea of repeating it. To what, however, will not misfortune compel a man ! I determined, at length, to call upon Sir —— ; to insist upon being shown to him. I set out for this purpose, without telling my errand to my wife, who, as I have before stated, was confined to her bed, and in a very feeble state of

health. It was a fine sunny morning, or rather noon ; all that I passed seemed happy and contented ; their spirits exhilarated by the genial weather, and sustained by the successful prosecution of business. *My* heart, however, was fluttering feebly beneath the pressure of anticipated disappointment. I was going in the spirit of a forlorn hope ; with a dogged determination to make the *attempt* ; to *know* that even this door was shut against me. My knees trembled beneath me as I entered — Place, and saw elegant equipages standing at the doors of most of the gloomy, but magnificent houses, which seemed to frown off such insignificant and wretched individuals as myself. How could I ever muster resolution enough, I thought, to ascend the steps, and knock and ring in a sufficiently authoritative manner to be attended to ? It is laughable to relate, but I could not refrain from stepping back into a by-street, and getting a small glass of some cordial spirit to give me a little firmness. At length I ventured again into — Place, and found Sir ——'s house, on the opposite side. There was no one to be seen but some footmen in undress, lolling indolently at the dining-room window, and making their remarks on passers by. I dreaded these fellows as much as their master ! It was no use, however, indulging in thoughts of that kind ; so I crossed over, and lifting the huge knocker, made a tolerably decided application of it, and pulled the bell with what I fancied was a sudden and imperative jerk. The summons was instantly answered by the corpulent porter, who, seeing nothing but a plain pedestrian, kept hold of the door, and leaning against the door-post, asked me familiarly what were my commands.

“ Is Sir —— at home ?”

“ Ye—es,” said the fellow, in a supercilious tone.

“ Can he be spoken to ?”

“ I think he can’t, for he wasn’t home till six o’clock this morning from the Duchess of ——’s.”

“ Can I wait for him ? and will you show him this card,” said I, tendering it to him—“ and say I have particular business ?”

“ Couldn’t look in again at four, could you ?” he inquired, in the same tone of cool assurance.

“ No, sir,” I replied, kindling with indignation, “ my business is urgent,—I shall wait now.”

With a yawn he opened the door for me, and called to a servant to show me into the antechamber, saying, I must make up my mind to wait an hour or two, as Sir —— was then only just getting up, and would be an hour at least at his breakfast. He then left me, saying he would send my card up to his master. My spirits were somewhat ruffled and agitated with having forced my way thus far through the frozen island of English aristocracy, and I sat down determined to wait patiently, till I was summoned up to Sir —— . I could hear several equipages dashing up to the door, and the visitors they brought were always shown up immediately. I rung the bell, and asked a servant why I was suffered to wait so long, as Sir —— was clearly visible now.

“ ’Pon honour, I don’t know, indeed,” said the fellow, coolly, shutting the door.

Boiling with indignation, I resumed my seat, then walked to and fro, and presently sat down again. Soon afterwards, I heard the French valet ordering the carriage to be in readiness in half an hour. I rung again ;

the same servant answered. He walked into the room, and standing near me, asked in a familiar tone, what I wanted. "Show me up to Sir ——, for I shall wait no longer," said I sternly.

"Can't, sir, indeed," he replied, with a smirk on his face.

"Has my card been shown to Sir ——?" I inquired, struggling to preserve my temper.

"I'll ask the porter if he gave it to Sir ——'s valet," he replied, and shut the door.

About ten minutes afterwards a carriage drove up; there was a bustle on the stairs, and in the hall. I heard a voice saying, "If Lord —— calls, tell him I am gone to his house;" in a few moments, the steps of the carriage were let down—the carriage drove off—and all was quiet. Once more I rung.

"Is Sir —— *now* at liberty?"

"Oh, he's gone out, sir," said the same servant, who had twice before answered my summons. The valet then entered. I asked him, with lips quivering with indignation, why I had not seen Sir ——? I was given to understand that my card had been shown the Baronet—that he said, "I've no time to attend to this person," or words to that effect—and had left his house without deigning to notice me! Without uttering more, than "Show me the door, sir," to the servant, I took my departure, determining to perish rather than make a second application. To anticipate my narrative a little, I may state, that ten years afterwards, Sir ——, who had become dreadfully addicted to gambling, lost all his property, and died suddenly of an apoplectic

seizure, brought on by a paroxysm of fury ! Thus did Providence reward this selfish and unfeeling man.

I walked about the town for several hours, endeavouring to wear off that air of chagrin and sorrow which had been occasioned by my reception at Sir ——'s. Something *must* be done, and that immediately ; for absolute starvation was now before us. I could think of but two other quarters where I could apply for a little temporary relief. I resolved to write a note to a very celebrated and successful brother practitioner, stating my necessities—acquainting him candidly with my whole circumstances, and soliciting the favour of a temporary accommodation of a few pounds—twenty was the sum I ventured to name. I wrote the letter at a coffee-house, and returned home. I spent all that evening in attempting to picture to myself the reception it would meet with. I tried to put myself in the place of him I had written to, and fancy the feelings with which I should receive a similar application. I need not, however, tantalize the reader. After nearly a fortnight's suspense, I received the following reply to my letter. I shall give it *verbatim*, after premising, that the writer of it was at that time making about £10,000 or £12,000 a-year :—

“ —— encloses a trifle (*one guinea*) to Dr —— ; wishes it may be serviceable ; but must say, that when young men attempt a station in life without competent funds to meet it, they cannot wonder if they fail.

“ —— Square.”

The other quarter was old Mr G——, our Indian lodger. Though an eccentric and reserved man, shunning all company except that of a favourite black servant, I thought he might yet be liberal. As he was

something of a character, I must be allowed a word or two about him, in passing. Though he occupied the whole of the first floor of my house, I seldom saw him. In truth, he was little else than a bronze fireside fixture, all day long, summer and winter,—protected from the intrusion of draughts and visitors, which equally annoyed him, by a huge folding-screen,—swathed, mummy-like, in flannel and furs—squalling incessant execrations against the chilly English climate—and solacing himself, alternately, with sleep, caudle and curry. He would sit for hours listening to a strange clattering, (I know no word but this that can give any thing like an idea of it,) and most melancholy noise, uttered by his black grizzle-headed servant—which I was given to understand was a species of Indian song—evincing his satisfaction by a face curiously puckered together, and small beady black eyes, glittering with the light of vertical suns : thus, I say, he would sit till both dropt asleep. He was very fond of this servant, (whose name was Clinquabor, or something of that sort,) and yet would kick and strike him with great violence on the slightest occasions.

Without being sordidly self-interested, I candidly acknowledge, that, on receiving him into our house, and submitting to divers inconveniences from his strange foreign fancies, I had calculated on his proving a lucrative lodger. I was, however, very much mistaken. He uniformly discouraged my visits, by evincing the utmost restlessness, and even trepidation, whenever I approached. He was more tolerant of my wife's visits ; but even to her could not help intimating, in pretty plain terms, on more occasions than one, that he had no idea of being “drugged to death by his landlord.” On

one occasion, however, his servant came stuttering with agitation into my room, that “hib massa wis to see—a—a Docta.” I found him suffering from the heartburn; submitted to his asthmatic querulousness for nearly half an hour; prescribed the usual remedies; and received in return—a guinea?—No, a curious, ugly, and perfectly useless cane, with which (to enhance its value) he assured me he had once kept a large snake at bay! On another occasion, in return for similar professional assistance, he dismissed me without tendering me a fee, or any thing instead of it; but sent for my wife, in the course of the afternoon, and presented her with a hideous little cracked china teapot, the lid fastened with a dingy silver chain, and the lip of the spout bearing evident marks of an ancient compound fracture. He was singularly exact in every thing he did: he paid his rent, for instance, at ten o’clock in the morning every quarter day, as long as he lived with me.

Such was the man whose assistance I had at last determined to ask. With infinite hesitation and embarrassment, I stated my circumstances. He fidgeted sadly, till I concluded, almost inarticulate with agitation, by soliciting the loan of £ 300—offering, at the same time, to deposit with him the lease of my house, as a collateral security for what he might advance me.

“My God!” he exclaimed, falling back in his chair, and elevating his hands.

“Would you favour me with this sum, Mr G——?” I inquired in a respectful tone.

“Do you take me, Doctor, for a money-lender?”

“No, indeed, sir; but for an obliging friend as well as lodger—if you will allow me the liberty.”

“ Ha ! you think me a rich old hunk come from India, to fling his gold at every one he sees ?”

“ May I beg an answer, sir ?” said I, after a pause.

“ I cannot lend it you, Doctor,” he replied calmly, and bowed me to the door. I rushed down stairs almost gnashing my teeth with fury. The Deity seemed to have marked me with a curse. No one would listen to me !

The next day my rent was due ; which, with Mr G——’s rent, and the savings of excruciating parsimony, I contrived to meet. Then came old L—— ! Good God ! what were my feelings when I saw him hobble up to my door. I civilly assured him, with a quaking heart, and ashy cheeks, but with the calmness of despair, that though it was not convenient to-day, he should have it on the morning of the next day. His greedy, black, Jewish eye seemed to dart into my very soul. He retired, apparently satisfied, and I almost fell down and blessed him on my knees, for his forbearance.

It was on Wednesday, two days after Christmas, that my dear Emily came down stairs after her confinement. Though pale and languid, she looked very lovely, and her fondness for me seemed redoubled. By way of honouring the season, and welcoming my dear wife down stairs, in spite of my fearful embarrassments, I expended my last guinea in providing a tolerably comfortable dinner, such as I had not sat down to for many a long week. I was determined to cast care aside for one day at least. The little table was set ; the small but savoury roast beef was on ; and I was just drawing the cork of a solitary bottle of port, when a heavy knock was

heard at the street door. I almost fainted at the sound—I knew not why. The servant answered the door, and two men entered the very parlour, holding a thin slip of parchment in their hands.

“In God’s name, who are you?—what brings you here?” I inquired—or rather gasped, while my wife sat silent, trembling, and looking very faint.

“Are you the gentleman that is named here?” inquired one of the men, in a civil and even compassionate tone—showing me a *writ* issued by old L——, for the money I owed him! My poor wife saw my agitation, and the servant arrived just in time to preserve her from falling, for she had fainted. I had her carried to bed, and was permitted to wait by her bedside for a few moments; when, more dead than alive, I surrendered myself into the hands of the officers. “Lord, Sir,”—said they, as I walked between them, “this here is not by no manner of means an uncommon thing, dy’e see—thof it’s rather hard, too, to leave one’s dinner and one’s wife so sudden! But you’ll no doubt soon get bailed—and then, you see, there’s a little time for turning in!” I answered not a syllable—for I felt suffocated. *Bail*—where was I—a poor, unknown, starving physician—to apply for it?—Even if I could succeed in finding it, would it not be unprincipled to take their security when I had no conceivable means of meeting the fearful claim? What is the use of merely *postponing* the evil day, in order to aggravate its horrors! I shall never forget that half hour, if I were to live a thousand years. I felt as if I were stepping into my grave. My heart was utterly withered within me.

A few hours beheld me the sullen and despairing oc-

cupant of the back attic of a sponging-house* near Leicester Square. The weather was bitterly inclement, yet no fire was allowed one who had not a farthing to pay for it—since I had slipped the only money I had in the world,—three shillings,—into the pocket of my insensible wife at parting. Had it not been for my poor Emily and my child, I think I should have put an end to my miserable existence ; for *to prison I must go*—if there was no miracle to save me ; and what was to become of Emily and her little one ? Jewels she had none to pawn—my books had nearly all disappeared—the scanty remnants of our furniture were not worth selling. Great God ! I was nearly frantic when I thought of all this. I sat up the whole night without fire or candle, (for the brutal wretch in whose custody I was, suspected I had money with me, and would not part with it,) till nearly seven o'clock in the morning, when I sank in a state of stupor, on the bed, and fell asleep. How long I continued so, I know not ; for I was roused from a dreary dream by some one embracing me, and repeatedly kissing my lips and forehead. It was my poor Emily ! who, at the imminent risk of her life, having found out where I was, had hurried to bring me the news of release ; for she had succeeded in obtaining the sum of £ 300 from our lodger, which I had in vain solicited. We returned home immediately. I hastened up stairs to our lodger to express the most enthusiastic

* “ *Une maison de dépôt,*” says the French Translator ; adding, amusingly enough, in a note,—“ (1.) *Springing-house (!)* est maison où l’on dépose le débiteur, avant son installation définitive : leur état de la malpropreté et les impôts odieux que l’on y préleve sur les malheureux que l’on y amène, sont, dit on, une des plaies les plus honteuses de la législation, et de la pénalité anglaise.”

thanks. He listened without interruption, and then coldly replied,—“ I would rather have your note of hand, sir !” * Almost choked with mortification at receiving such an unfeeling rebuff, I gave him what he asked, expecting nothing more than that he would presently act the part of old L——. He did not, however, trouble me.

The few pounds above what was due to our relentless creditor L——, sufficed to meet some of our more pressing exigencies ; but as they gradually disappeared, my prospects became darker than ever. The agitation and distress which recent occurrences had occasioned, threw my wife into a low, nervous, hysterical state, which added to my misfortunes ; and her little infant was sensibly pining away, as if in unconscious sympathy with its wretched parents. Where *now* were we to look for help ? We had a new creditor, to a serious amount, in Mr G——, our lodger ; whatever, therefore, might be the extremity of our distress, applying to *him* was out of the question ; nay, it would be well if he proved a lenient creditor. The hateful annuity was again becoming due. It pressed like an incubus upon us. The form of old L—— flitted incessantly around us, as though it were a fiend, goading us on to destruction. I am sure I must often have raved frightfully in my sleep ; for more than once I was woke by my wife clinging to me, and exclaiming, in terrified accents, “ Oh, hush, hush, ——, don’t, for Heaven’s sake, say so !”

To add to my misery, she and the infant began to

* “ *La reconnaissance.*—Selon la loi anglaise, la reconnaissance d’une dette, sans époque assignée pour le paiement, est toujours valable pour l’arrestation du signataire.”—*Note of French Translator.*

keep their bed ; and our lodger, whose constitution had been long ago broken up, began to fail rapidly. I was in daily and most harassing attendance on him ; but of course, could not expect a fee, as I was already his debtor to a large amount. I had three patients who paid me regularly, but only one was a daily patient ; and I was obliged to lay by, out of these small incomings, a cruel portion to meet my rent, and L——'s annuity. Surely my situation was now like that of the fabled scorpion, surrounded with fiery destruction ! Every one in the house, and my few acquaintances without, expressed surprise and commiseration at my wretched appearance. I was worn almost to a skeleton ; and when I looked suddenly in the glass, my worn and hollow looks startled me. My fears magnified the illness of my wife ; the whole world seemed melting away from me into gloom and darkness.

My thoughts, I well recollect, seemed to be perpetually occupied with the dreary image of a desolate churchyard, wet and cold with the sleets and storms of winter. O, that I, and my wife and child, I have sometimes madly thought, were sleeping peacefully in our long home ! Why were we brought into the world ?—why did my nature prompt me to seek my present station in society ?—merely for the purpose of reducing me to the dreadful condition of him of old, whose only consolation from his friends was,—Curse God, and die ! What had we done— what had our forefathers done—that Providence should thus frown upon us, thwarting every thing we attempted !

Fortune, however, at last seemed tired of persecuting me ; and my affairs took a favourable turn when most

they needed it, and when least I expected it. On what small and insignificant things do our fates depend! Truly—

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

About eight o'clock one evening in the month of March, I was walking down the Haymarket, as usual, in a very disconsolate mood, in search of some shop where I might execute a small commission for my wife. The whole neighbourhood in front of the Operahouse door, exhibited the usual scene of uproar, arising from clashing carriages and quarrelsome coachmen. I was standing at the box-door, watching with sickening feelings the company descend from their carriages, when a cry was heard from the very centre of the crowd of coaches,—“Run for a doctor!” I rushed instantly to the spot, at the peril of my life, announcing my profession. I soon made my way up to the open door of a carriage, from which issued the moanings of a female, evidently in great agony. The accident was this: A young lady had suddenly stretched her arm through the open window of the carriage conveying her to the opera, for the purpose of pointing out to one of her companions a brilliant illumination of one of the opposite houses. At that instant their coachman, dashing forward to gain the open space opposite the box door, shot with great velocity, and within a hairsbreadth distance past a retiring carriage. The consequence was inevitable: a sudden shriek announced the dislocation of the young lady's shoulder, and the shocking laceration of the fore-arm and hand. When I arrived at the carriage door, the unfortunate sufferer was lying motionless in the arms of an elderly gentle-

man and a young lady, both of them, as might be expected, dreadfully agitated. It was the Earl of — and his two daughters. Having entered the carriage, I placed my fair patient in such a position as would prevent her suffering more than was necessary from the motion of the carriage—despatched one of the servants for Mr Cline, to meet us on our arrival, and then the coachman was ordered to drive home as fast as possible. I need not say more, than that, by Mr Cline's skill, the dislocation was quickly reduced, and the wounded hand and arm duly dressed. I then prescribed what medicines were necessary—received a check for ten guineas from the Earl, accompanied with fervent thanks for my prompt attentions, and was requested to call as early as possible the next morning.

As soon as I had left his lordship's door, I shot homeward like an arrow. My good fortune (truly it is an ill wind that blows *nobody* any good) was almost too much for me. I could scarce repress the violence of my emotions, but felt a continual inclination to relieve myself, by singing, shouting, or committing some other such extravagance. I arrived at home in a very few minutes, and rushed breathless up stairs, joy glittering in my eyes, to communicate—inarticulate with emotion—my good fortune to my wife, and congratulate ourselves that the door of professional success seemed at length really opened to us. How tenderly she tried to calm my excitement, and moderate my expectations, without, at the same time, depressing my spirits! I did certainly feel somewhat damped, when I recollected the little incident of my introduction to Sir William —, and its abrupt and unexpected termination. *This*, however,

seemed a very different affair ; and the event proved that my expectations were not ill founded.

I continued in constant attendance on my fair patient, who was really a very lovely girl ; and, by my unremitting and anxious attentions, so conciliated the favour of the Earl, and the rest of his family, that the Countess, who had long been an invalid, was committed to my care, jointly with that of the family physician. I need hardly say, that my poor services were most nobly remunerated ; and more than this—having succeeded in securing the confidence of the family, it was not many weeks before I had the honour of visiting one or two of their connexions of high rank ; and I felt conscious that I was laying the foundation of a fashionable and lucrative practice. With joy unutterable, I contrived to be ready for our half-yearly tormentor, old L—— ; and somewhat surprised him, by asking, with an easy air—oh, the luxury of that moment !—when he wished for a return of his principal. Of course, he was not desirous of losing such interest as I was paying !

I had seen too much of the bitterness of adversity, to suffer the dawn of good fortune to elate me into too great confidence. I now husbanded my resources with rigorous economy—and had, in return, the inexpressible satisfaction of being able to pay my way, and stand fair with *all* my creditors. Oh, the rapture of being able to pay every one his own !—My beloved Emily appeared in that society which she was born to ornament ; and we numbered several families of high respectability among our visiting friends.—As is usual in such cases, whenever accident threw me in the way of those who formerly scowled upon me contemptuously, I was re-

ceived with an excess of civility. The very physician who sent me the munificent donation of a guinea, I met in consultation, and made his cheeks tingle, by returning him the *loan* he had advanced me !

In four years' time from the occurrence at the Hay-market, I contrived to repay old L—— his £ 3000, (though he did not live a month after signing the receipt,) and thus escaped—blessed be God!—for ever from the fangs of the money-lenders. A word or two, also, about our Indian lodger. He died about eighteen months after the accident I have been relating. His sole heir was a young lieutenant in the navy ; and, very much to my surprise and gratification, in a codicil to old Mr G——'s will, I was left a legacy of £ 2000, including the £ 300 he had lent me, saying, it was some return for the many attentions he had received from us since he had been our lodger, and as a mark of his approbation of the honourable and virtuous principles by which, he said, he had always perceived our conduct to be actuated. .

Twelve years from this period, my income amounted to between £ 3000 and £ 4000 a-year ; and as my family was increasing, I thought my means warranted a more extensive establishment. I therefore removed into a large and elegant house, and set up my carriage. The recollection of past times has taught me at least one useful lesson—whether my life be long or short,—to bear success with moderation, and never to turn a deaf ear to applications from the younger and less successful members of my profession.

Sweet are the uses of adversity ;
Which, like a toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

CHAPTER II.

CANCER.

ONE often hears of the great firmness of the female sex, and their powers of enduring a degree of physical pain, which would utterly break down the stubborn strength of man. An interesting exemplification of this remark, will be found in the short narrative immediately following. The event made a strong impression on my mind at the time, and I thought it well worthy of an entry in my Diary.

I had for several months been in constant attendance on a Mrs St——, a young married lady, of considerable family and fortune, who was the victim of that terrible scourge of the female sex, a cancer. To great personal attractions, she added uncommon sweetness of disposition; and the fortitude with which she submitted to the agonizing inroads of her malady, together with her ardent expressions of gratitude for such temporary alleviations as her anxious medical attendants could supply, contributed to inspire me with a very lively interest in her fate. I can conscientiously say, that, during the

whole period of my attendance, I never heard a word of complaint fall from her, nor witnessed any indications of impatience or irritability. I found her, one morning, stretched on the crimson sofa in the drawing-room; and though her pallid features, and gently corrugated eyebrows, evidenced the intense agony she was suffering, on my inquiring what sort of a night she had passed, she replied, in a calm but tremulous tone,—“ Oh, Doctor, I have had a dreadful night; but I am glad Captain St—— was not with me; for it would have made him very wretched!” At that moment, a fine flaxen-haired little boy, her first and only child, came running into the room, his blue laughing eyes glittering with innocent merriment. I took him on my knee, and amused him with my watch, in order that he might not disturb his mother. The poor sufferer, after gazing on him with an air of intense fondness for some moments, suddenly covered her eyes with her hand, (oh! how slender! how snowy! how almost transparent was that hand!) and I presently saw the tears trickling through her fingers; but she uttered not a word. There was the *mother*! The aggravated malignity of her disorder rendered an operation at length inevitable. The eminent surgeon, who, jointly with myself, was in regular attendance on her, feelingly communicated the intelligence, and asked whether she thought she had fortitude enough to submit to an operation? She assured him, with a sweet smile of resignation, that she had for some time been suspecting as much, and had made up her mind to submit to it, but on two conditions,—that her husband (who was then at sea) should not be informed of it, till it was over; and that, during the operation,

she should not be in any wise bound or blindfolded. Her calm and decisive manner convinced me that remonstrance would be useless. Sir —— looked at me with a doubtful air. She observed it ; and said, “ I see what you are thinking, Sir —— ; but I hope to show you that a woman has more courage than you seem willing to give her credit for.” In short, after the surgeon had acquiesced in the latter condition—to which he had especially demurred—a day was fixed for the operation—subject, of course, to Mrs St——’s state of health. When the Wednesday arrived, it was with some agitation that I entered Sir ——’s carriage, in company with himself, and his senior pupil, Mr —— . I could scarce avoid a certain nervous tremor—unprofessional as it may seem—when I saw the servant place the operating case on the seat of the carriage. “ Are you sure you have every thing ready, Mr —— ?” inquired Sir —— , with a calm business-like air, which somewhat irritated me. On being assured of the affirmative, and after cautiously casting his eye over the case of instruments *, to make assurance doubly sure, we drove off. We arrived at Mrs St——’s, who resided a few miles from town, about two o’clock in the afternoon, and were immediately ushered into the room in which the operation was to be performed—a back parlour, the window of which looked into a beautiful garden. I shall be pardoned, I hope, for acknowledging, that the glimpse I caught of the pale and

* I once saw the life of a patient lost, merely through the want of such simple precaution as that of Sir —— , in the present instance. An indispensable instrument was suddenly required in the midst of the operation ; and, to the dismay of the operator and those around him, there was none at hand !

disordered countenance of the servant, as he retired, after showing us into the room, somewhat disconcerted me : for, in addition to the deep interest I felt in the fate of the lovely sufferer, I had always an abhorrence for the operative part of the profession, which many years of practice did not suffice to remove. The necessary arrangements being at length completed—consisting of a hateful array of instruments, cloths, sponge, warm water, &c. &c. a message was sent to Mrs St——, to inform her all was ready.

Sir —— was just making a jocular and not very well-timed allusion to my agitated air, when the door was opened, and Mrs St—— entered, followed by her two attendants. Her step was firm, her air composed, and her pale features irradiated with a smile—sad, however, as the cold twilight of October. She was then about twenty six or seven years of age—and, under all the disadvantageous circumstances in which she was placed, looked at that moment a beautiful woman. Her hair was light auburn, and hung back neglectedly over a forehead and neck white as marble. Her full blue eyes, which usually beamed with a delicious pensive expression from beneath

—the soft languor of the drooping lid,

were now lighted with the glitter of a restlessness and agitation, which the noblest degree of self-command could not entirely conceal or repress. Her features were regular—her nose and mouth exquisitely chiselled—and her complexion fair, almost to transparency. Indeed, an eminent medical writer has remarked that the most beautiful women are generally the subjects of this

terrible disease. A large Indian shawl was thrown over her shoulders, and she wore a white muslin dressing-gown. And was it this innocent and beautiful being who was doomed to writhe beneath the torture and disfigurement of the operating knife? My heart ached. A decanter of port wine and some glasses, were placed on a small table near the window; she beckoned me towards it, and was going to speak.

“Allow me, my dear madam, to pour you a glass of wine,” said I—or rather faltered.

“If it would do me good, Doctor,” she whispered. She barely touched the glass with her lips, and then handed one to me, saying, with assumed cheerfulness, “Come, Doctor, I see you need it as much as I do, after all. Yes, Doctor,” she continued, with emphasis, “you are very, *very* kind and feeling to me.” When I had set down the glass, she continued, “Dear Doctor, do forgive a woman’s weakness, and try if you can hold this letter, which I received yesterday from Captain St——, and in which he speaks very fondly, so that my eyes may rest on his dear handwriting all the while I am sitting here, without being noticed by any one else—will you?”

“Madam, you must really excuse me—it will agitate you—I must beg”—

“You are mistaken,” she replied with firmness; “it will rather compose me. And if I *should*”—expire, she was going to have said—but her tongue refused utterance. She then put the letter into my hand—hers was cold, icy cold, and clammy—but I did not perceive it tremble.

“ In return, madam, you must give me leave to hold your hand during the operation.”

“ What—you fear me, Doctor?” she replied, with a faint smile, but did not refuse my request. At this moment, Sir —— approached us with a cheerful air, saying, “ Well, madam, is your tete-a-tete finished ? I want to get this little matter over, and give you permanent ease.” I do not think there ever lived a professional man who could speak with such an assuring air as Sir —— !

“ I am ready, Sir —— . Are the servants sent out ?” she inquired from one of the women present.

“ Yes, madam,” she replied, in tears.

“ And my little Harry ?” Mrs St—— asked, in a fainter tone. She was answered in the affirmative.

“ Then I am prepared,” said she, and sat down in the chair that was placed for her. One of the attendants then removed the shawl from her shoulders, and Mrs St—— herself, with perfect composure, assisted in displacing as much of her dress as was necessary. She then suffered Sir —— to place her on the corner side of the chair, with her left arm thrown over the back of it, and her face looking over her right shoulder. She gave me her right hand ; and, with my left, I endeavoured to hold Captain St——’s letter, as she had desired. She smiled sweetly, as if to assure me of her fortitude ; and there was something so indescribably affecting in the expression of her full blue eyes, that it almost broke my heart. I shall never forget that smile as long as I live ! Half closing her eyes, she fixed them on the letter I held—and did not once remove them till all was over. Nothing could console me at this trying moment,

but a conviction of the consummate skill of Sir ——, who now, with a calm eye, and a steady hand, commenced the operation. At the instant of the first incision, her whole frame quivered with a convulsive shudder, and her cheeks became ashy pale. I prayed inwardly that she might faint, so that the earlier stage of the operation might be got over, while she was in a state of insensibility. It was not the case, however—her eyes continued riveted in one long burning gaze of fondness on the beloved handwriting of her husband; and she moved not a limb, nor uttered more than an occasional sigh, during the whole of the protracted and painful operation. When the last bandage had been applied, she whispered almost inarticulately, “Is it all over, Doctor?”

“Yes, madam,” I replied, “and we are going to carry you up to bed.”

“No, no—I think I can walk—I will try,” said she, and endeavoured to rise; but on Sir —— assuring her that the motion might perhaps induce fatal consequences, she desisted, and we carried her, sitting in the chair, up to bed. The instant we had laid her down, she swooned—and continued so long insensible, that Sir —— held a looking-glass over her mouth and nostrils, apprehensive that the vital energies had at last sunk under the terrible struggle. She recovered, however; and under the influence of an opiate draught, slept for several hours.

* * * * *

Mrs St—— recovered, though very slowly; and I attended her assiduously—sometimes two or three times a-day, till she could be removed to the sea-side. I shall

not easily forget an observation she made at the last visit I paid her. She was alluding, one morning, distantly and delicately, to the personal disfigurement she had suffered. I, of course, said all that was soothing.

“ But, Doctor, my *husband*”——said she, suddenly, while a faint crimson mantled on her cheek——adding, falteringly, after a pause,—“ I think St—— will love me yet !”

CHAPTER III.

THE DENTIST AND THE COMEDIAN.

FRIDAY, — 18—. A ludicrous contretemps happened to-day, which I wish I could describe as forcibly as it struck me. Mr —, the well-known comedian, with whom I was on terms of intimacy, after having suffered so severely from the toothach, as to be prevented, for two evenings, from taking his part in the play, sent, under my direction, for Monsieur —, a fashionable dentist, then but recently imported from France. While I was sitting with my friend, endeavouring to “screw his courage up to the sticking place,” Monsieur arrived, duly furnished with the “tools of his craft.” The comedian sat down with a rueful visage, and eyed the dentist’s formidable preparations with a piteous and disconcerted air. As soon as I had taken my station behind, for the purpose of holding the patient’s head, the gum was lanced without much ado; but as the doomed tooth was a very formidable broadrooted molar, Monsieur prepared for a vigorous effort. He was just commencing the dreadful wrench, when he suddenly relaxed his hold, retired a step or two from his

patient, and burst into a loud fit of laughter ! Up started the astounded comedian, and with clenched fists demanded furiously, “ What the —— he meant by such conduct ? ” The little bewhiskered foreigner, however, continued standing at a little distance, still so convulsed with laughter as to disregard the menacing movements of his patient ; and exclaiming, “ Ah, mon Dieu !—ver good—ver good—bien ! ha, ha !—Be Gar, Monsieur, you pull one such d—— queer, extraordinaire comique face—Be Gar, like one big fiddle ! ” or words to that effect. The dentist was right : Mr ——’s features were odd enough at all times ; but, on the present occasion, they suffered such excruciating contortions—such a strange puckering together of the mouth and cheeks, and upturning of the eyes, that it was ten thousand times more laughable than any artificially distorted features with which he used to set Drury Lane in a roar.—Oh that a painter had been present !—There was, on one side, my friend, standing in menacing attitude, with both fists clenched, his left cheek swelled, and looking as if the mastication of a large apple had been suddenly suspended, and his whole features exhibiting a grotesque expression of mingled pain, indecision, and fury. Then there was the operator beginning to look a little startled at the probable consequences of his sally ; and, lastly, I stood a little aside, almost suffocated with suppressed laughter ! At length, however, ——’s perception of the ridiculous prevailed ; and after a very hearty laugh, and exclaiming, “ I *must* have looked odd, I suppose ! ” he once more resigned himself into the hands of Monsieur, and the tooth was out in a twinkling.

CHAPTER IV.

A SCHOLAR'S DEATHBED.

[MUCH more of the following short, but melancholy, narrative, might have been committed to press ; but as it would have related chiefly to a mad devotion to *alchemy*, which some of Mr ——'s few posthumous papers abundantly evidence, it is omitted, lest the reader should consider the details as romantic or improbable. All that is worth recording is told ; and it is hoped, that some young men of powerful, undisciplined, and ambitious minds, will find their account in an attentive consideration of the fate of a kindred spirit. *Bene facit, qui ex aliorum erroribus sibi exemplum sumat.*]

Thinking, one morning, that I had gone through the whole of my usual levee of home patients, I was preparing to go out, when the servant informed me there was one yet to be spoken with, who, he thought, must have been asleep in a corner of the room, else he could not have failed to summon him in his turn. Directing him to be shewn in immediately, I retook my place at

my desk. The servant, in a few moments, ushered in a young man, who seemed to have scarce strength enough, even with the assistance of a walking-stick, to totter to a chair opposite me. I was much struck with his appearance, which was that of one in reduced circumstances. His clothes, though perfectly clean and neat, were faded and threadbare ; and his coat was buttoned up to his chin, where it was joined by a black silk neckerchief, in such a manner as to lead me to suspect the absence of a shirt. He was rather below than above the average height, and seemed wasted almost to a shadow. There was an air of superior ease and politeness in his demeanour ; and an expression about his countenance, sickly and sallow though it was, so melancholy, mild, and intelligent, that I could not help viewing him with peculiar interest.

“ I was afraid, my friend, I should have missed you,” said I, in a kind tone, “ as I was on the point of going out.”—“ I heard your carriage drive up to the door, Doctor, and shall not detain you more than a few moments : nay, I will call to-morrow, if that would be more convenient,” he replied faintly, suddenly pressing his hand to his side, as though the effort of speaking occasioned him pain. I assured him I had a quarter of an hour at his service, and begged he would proceed at once to state the nature of his complaint. He detailed—what I had anticipated from his appearance—all the symptoms of a very advanced stage of pulmonary consumption. He expressed himself in very select and forcible language ; and once or twice, when at a loss for what he conceived an adequate expression in English, chose such an appropriate Latin phrase, that the thought

perpetually suggested itself to me, while he was speaking—" *a starved scholar !*" He had not the most distant allusion to poverty, but confined himself to the leading symptoms of his indisposition. I determined, however, (*haud præteritorum immemor !*) to ascertain his circumstances, with a view, if possible, of relieving them. I asked if he ate animal food with relish,—enjoyed his dinner,—whether his meals were regular. He coloured, and hesitated a little, for I put the question searchingly ; and replied, with some embarrassment, that he did not, certainly, *then* eat regularly, nor enjoy his food when he did. I soon found that he was in very straitened circumstances ; that, in short, he was sinking rapidly under the pressure of want and harassing anxiety, which alone had accelerated, if not wholly induced, his present illness ; and that all he had to expect from medical aid, was a little alleviation. I prescribed a few simple medicines, and then asked him in what part of the town he resided.

" I am afraid, Doctor," said he modestly, " I shall be unable to afford your visiting me at my own lodgings. I will occasionally call on you here, as a morning patient,"—and he proffered me half a guinea. The conviction that it was probably the very last he had in the world, and a keen recollection of similar scenes in my own history, almost brought the tears into my eyes. I refused the fee, of course ; and prevailed on him to let me set him down, as I was driving close past his residence. He seemed overwhelmed with gratitude ; and with a blush, hinted, that he was " not quite in carriage costume." He lived in one of the small streets leading from May-fair ; and after having made a note in my

tablets of his name and number, I set him down, promising him an early call.

The clammy pressure of his wasted fingers, as I shook his hand at parting, remained with me all that day. I could not dismiss from my mind the mild and sorrowful countenance of this young man, go where I would ; and I was on the point of mentioning the incident to a most excellent and generous nobleman, whom I was then attending, and soliciting his assistance, but the thought that it was premature, checked me. There *might* be something unworthy in the young man ; he might *possibly* be an—impostor. These were hard thoughts—chilling and unworthy suspicions, but I could not resist them : alas ! an eighteen years' intercourse with a deceitful world has alone taught me how to entertain them !

As my wife dined a little way out of town that evening, I hastily swallowed a solitary meal, and set out in quest of my morning patient. With some difficulty I found the house ; it was the meanest, and in the meanest street, I had visited for months. I knocked at the door, which was open, and surrounded by a babbling throng of dirty children. A slatternly woman, with a child in her arms, answered my summons. Mr —, she said, lived there, in the top floor ; but he was just gone out for a few moments, she supposed, “ to get a mouthful of victuals, but I was welcome to go up and wait for him, since,” said the rude wretch, “ there was not much to make away with, howsoever !” One of her children led me up the narrow, dirty staircase, and having ushered me into the room, left me to my meditations. A wretched hole it was in which I was sitting ! The evening sun streamed in discoloured rays through

the unwashed panes, here and there mended with brown paper, and sufficed to show me that the only furniture consisted of a miserable, curtainless bed, (the disordered clothes showing that the weary limbs of the wretched occupant had but recently left it)—three old rush-bottomed chairs—and a rickety deal table, on which were scattered several pages of manuscript—a letter or two—pens, ink, and a few books. There was no chest of drawers—nor did I see any thing likely to serve as a substitute. Poor Mr —— probably carried about with him all he had in the world ! There was a small sheet of writing paper pinned over the mantel-piece, (if such it deserved to be called,) which I gazed at with a sigh ; it bore simply the outline of a coffin, with Mr ——'s initials, and “ *obiit* —— 18—,” evidently in his own handwriting. Curious to see the kind of books he preferred, I took them up and examined them. There were, if I recollect right, a small Amsterdam edition of Plautus—a Horace—a much befingered copy of Aristophanes—a neat pocket edition of Æschylus—a small copy of the works of Lactantius—and two odd volumes of English books. I had no intention of being impertinently inquisitive, but my eye accidentally lit on the uppermost manuscript, and seeing it to be in the Greek character, I took it up, and found a few verses of Greek sapphics, entitled, *Ἐἰς τὴν νῦν τε τελευταίαν*—evidently the recent composition of Mr —— . He entered the room as I was laying down the paper, and started at seeing a stranger, for it seems the people of the house had not taken the trouble to inform him I was waiting. On discovering who it was, he bowed politely, and gave me his hand ; but the sudden agitation my presence had oc-

casioned, deprived him of utterance. I thought I could almost *hear* the palpitation of his heart. I brought him to a chair, and begged him to be calm.

“ You are not worse, Mr —, I hope, since I saw you this morning ?” I inquired. He whispered almost inarticulately, holding his hand to his left side, that he was always worse in the evenings. I felt his pulse ; it beat 130 ! I discovered that he had gone out for the purpose of trying to get employment in a neighbouring printing-office !—but, having failed, had returned in a state of deeper depression than usual. The perspiration rolled from his brow almost faster than he could wipe it away. I sat by him for nearly two minutes, holding his hand, without uttering a word, for I was deeply affected. At length I begged he would forgive my inquiring how it was that a young man of talent and education like himself could be reduced to a state of such utter destitution ? While I was waiting for an answer, he suddenly fell from his chair in a swoon. The exertion of walking, the pressure of disappointment, and, I fear, the almost unbroken fast of the day, added to the sudden shock occasioned by encountering me in his room, had completely prostrated the small remains of his strength. When he had a little revived, I succeeded in laying him on the bed, and instantly summoned the woman of the house. After some time, she sauntered lazily to the door, and asked me what I wanted. “ Are you the person that attends on this gentleman, my good woman ?” I inquired.

“ Marry come up, sir !” she replied in a loud tone—“ I’ve no manner of cause for attending on him, not I ; he ought to attend on himself : and as for his being a

gentleman," she continued, with an insolent sneer, for which I felt heartily inclined to throw her down stairs, "not a stiver of his money have I seen for this three weeks for his rent, and"—— Seeing the fluent virago was warming, and approaching close to my unfortunate patient's bedside, I stopped her short by putting half a guinea into her hand, and directing her to purchase a bottle of port wine ; at the same time hinting, that if she conducted herself properly, I would see her rent paid myself. I then shut the door, and resumed my seat by Mr ——, who was trembling violently all over with agitation, and endeavoured to soothe him. The more I said, however, and the kinder were my tones, the more was he affected. At length he burst into a flood of tears, and continued weeping for some time, like a child. I saw it was hysterical, and that it was best to let his feelings have their full course. His nervous excitement at length gradually subsided, and he began to converse with tolerable coolness.

"Doctor," he faltered, "your conduct is very—very noble—it *must* be disinterested," pointing with a bitter air, to the wretched room in which we were sitting.

"I feel sure, Mr ——, that you have done nothing to *merit* your present misfortunes," I replied, with a serious and inquiring air.

"Yes—yes, I have!—I have indulged in wild ambitious hopes—lived in absurd dreams of future greatness—been educated beyond my fortunes—and formed tastes, and cherished feelings, incompatible with the station it seems I was born to,—beggary or daily labour!" was his answer, with as much vehemence as his weakness would allow.

"But Mr——, your friends—your relatives—they cannot be apprized of your situation."

"Alas! Doctor, friends I have none—unless you will permit me to name the last and noblest,—yourself; relatives, several."

"And they, of course, do not know of your illness, and straitened circumstances?"

"They do, Doctor—and kindly assure me I have brought it on myself. To do them justice, however, they could not, I believe, efficiently help me, if they would."

"Why, have you offended them, Mr ——? Have they cast you off?"

"Not avowedly—not in so many words. They have simply refused to receive or answer any more of my letters. Possibly I may have offended them, but am content to meet them hereafter, and try the justice of the case—*there*," said Mr ——, solemnly pointing upwards.—"Well I know, and so do you, Doctor, that my days on earth are very few, and likely to be very bitter also." It was in vain I pressed him to tell me who his relatives were, and suffer me to solicit their personal attendance on his last moments. "It is altogether useless, Doctor, to ask me farther," said he, raising himself a little in bed,—“my father and mother are both dead, and no power on earth shall extract from me a syllable farther. It is hard,” he continued, bursting again into tears, “if I must *die* amid their taunts and reproaches.” I felt quite at a loss what to say to all this. There was something very singular, if not reprehensible, in his manner of alluding to his relatives, which led me to fear

that he was by no means free from blame. Had I not felt myself very delicately [situate, and dreaded even the possibility of hurting his morbidly irritable feelings, I felt inclined to have asked him how he thought of *existing* without their aid, especially in his forlorn and helpless state ; having neither friends, nor the means of obtaining them. I thought, also, that short as had been my intimacy with him, I had discerned symptoms of a certain obstinacy, and haughty imperiousness of temper, which would sufficiently account, if not for occasioning, at least for widening, any unhappy breach which might have occurred in his family. But what was to be done? I could not let him starve ; as I had voluntarily stepped in to his assistance, I determined to make his last moments easy—at least as far as lay in my power.

A little to anticipate the course of my narrative, I may here state what information concerning him was elicited in the course of our various interviews. His father and mother had left Ireland, their native place, early, and gone to Jamaica, where they lived as slave superintendents. They left their only son to the care of the wife's brother-in-law, who put him to school, where he much distinguished himself. On the faith of it, he contrived to get to the college in Dublin, where he staid two years : and then, in a confident reliance on his own talents, and the sum of £50, which was sent him from Jamaica, with intelligence of the death of both his parents in impoverished circumstances, he had come up to London, it seems, with no very definite end in view. Here he continued for about two years ; but, in addition to the failure of his health, all his efforts to es-

tablish himself proved abortive. He contrived to glean a scanty sum, heaven knows how, which was gradually lessening at a time when his impaired health rather required that his resources should be augmented. He had no friends in respectable life, whose influence or wealth might have been serviceable ; and, at the time he called on me, he had not more in the world than the solitary half-guinea he proffered to me as a fee. I never learnt the names of any of his relatives ; but from several things occasionally dropped in the heat of conversation, it was clear there must have been unhappy differences.

To return, however. As the evening was far advancing, and I had one or two patients yet to visit, I began to think of taking my departure. I enjoined him strictly to keep his bed till I saw him again, to preserve as calm and equable a frame of mind as possible, and to dismiss all anxiety for the future, as I would gladly supply his present necessities, and send him a civil and attentive nurse. He tried to thank me, but his emotions choked his utterance. He grasped my hand with convulsive energy. His eye spoke eloquently ; but, alas ! it shone with the fierce and unnatural lustre of consumption, as though, I have often thought in such cases, the conscious soul was glowing with the reflected light of its kindred element,—eternity. I knew it was impossible for him to survive many days, from several unequivocal symptoms of what is called, in common language, a galloping consumption. I was as good as my word, and sent him a nurse (the mother of one of my servants), who was charged to pay

him the utmost attention in her power. My wife also sent him a little bed-furniture, linen, preserves, jellies, and other small matters of that sort. I visited him every evening, and found him on each occasion verifying my apprehensions, for he was sinking rapidly. His mental energies, however, seemed to increase inversely with the decline of his physical powers. His conversation was animated, various, and, at times, enchainingly interesting. I have sometimes sat at his bedside for several hours together, wondering how one so young (he was not more than two or three and twenty) could have acquired so much information. He spoke with spirit and justness on the leading political topics of the day; and I particularly recollect his making some very noble reflections on the character and exploits of Bonaparte, who was then blazing in the zenith of his glory. Still, however, the current of his thoughts and language was frequently tinged with the enthusiasm and extravagance of delirium. Of this he seemed himself conscious; for he would sometimes suddenly stop, and, pressing his hand to his forehead, exclaim, "Doctor, Doctor, I am failing here—*here!*" He acknowledged that he had, from his childhood, given himself up to the dominion of ambition; and that his whole life had been spent in the most extravagant and visionary expectations. He would smile bitterly when he recounted some of what he justly stigmatized as his insane projects. "The objects of my ambition," he said, "have been vague and general; I never knew exactly where, or what, I would be. Had my powers, such as they are, been concentrated on one point—had I formed a

more just and modest estimate of my abilities—I might possibly have become something. * * *

Besides, Doctor, I had no *money*—no solid substratum to build upon ; there was the rotten point! Oh! Doctor,” he continued, with a deep sigh, “ if I could but have seen these things three years ago, as I see them *now*, I might at this moment have been a sober and respectable member of society ; but now I am dying a hanger-on—a fool—a beggar!” and he burst into tears. “ You, Doctor,” he presently continued, “ are accustomed, I suppose, to listen to these deathbed repinings—these soul-scourgings—these wailings over a badly spent life! Oh! yes ; as I am nearing eternity, I seem to look at things—at my own mind and heart, especially—through the medium of a strange, searching, unearthly light. Oh, how many, many things it makes distinct, which I would fain have forgotten for ever! Do you recollect the terrible language of Scripture, Doctor, which compares the human breast to a *cage of unclean birds*!”—I left him that evening deeply convinced of the compulsory truths he had uttered ; I never thought so seriously before. It is some Scotch divine who has said, that one deathbed preaches a more startling sermon than a bench of bishops.

* * * * *

Mr —— was an excellent and thorough Greek scholar, perfectly well versed in the Greek dramatists, and passionately fond, in particular, of Sophocles. I recollect his reciting, one evening, with great force and feeling, the touching exclamation of the chorus, in the *Œdipus Tyrannus*—

Ω πò ποι—ἀναρίθμα γὰρ
 φέρω πήματα,
 νοσεῖ δὲ μοί πρόπας στόλος,
 οὐδ' ἐνὶ φροντίδος ἔγχος
 ᾧ τις ἀλεξέται *, &c.

167-172.

—which, he said, was never absent from his mind, sleeping or waking. I once asked him, if he did not regret having devoted his life almost exclusively to the study of the classics. He replied, with enthusiasm, “No, Doctor—no, no! I should be an ingrate if I did. How can I regret having lived in constant converse, through their works, with the greatest and noblest men that ever breathed! I have lived in Elysium—have breathed the celestial air of those hallowed plains, while engaged in the study of the philosophy and poetry of Greece and Rome. Yes, it is a consolation even for my bitter and premature deathbed, to think that my mind will quit this wretched, diseased, unworthy body, imbued with the refinement—redolent of the eternal freshness and beauty of the most exquisite poetry and philosophy the world ever saw! With my faculties quickened and strengthened, I shall go confidently, and claim kindred with the great ones of Eternity. They know I love their works—have consumed all the oil of my life in their study, and they will welcome their son—their disciple!” Ill as he was, Mr —— uttered these sentiments (as nearly as I can recollect, in the very words I have

* Ah, me! I groan beneath the pressure of innumerable sorrows; truly my substance is languishing away, nor can I devise any means of bettering my condition, or discover any source of consolation.

given) with an energy, an enthusiasm, and an eloquence, which I never saw surpassed. He faltered suddenly, however, from this lofty pitch of excitement, and complained bitterly that his devotion to ancient literature had engendered a morbid sensibility, which had rendered him totally unfit for the ordinary business of life, or intermixture with society. * * *

Often I found him sitting up in bed, and reading his favourite play, the *Prometheus Vincit* of Æschylus, while his pale and wasted features glowed with delighted enthusiasm. He told me, that, in his estimation, there was an air of grandeur and romance about that play, such as was not equalled by any of the productions of the other Greek dramatists ; and that the opening dialogue was peculiarly impressive and affecting. He had committed to memory nearly three-fourths of the whole play ! I on one occasion asked him, how it came to pass, that a person of his superior classical attainments had not obtained some tolerably lucrative engagement as an usher or tutor ? He answered, with rather a haughty air, that he would rather have broken stones on the highway. " To hear," said he, " the magnificent language of Greece, the harmonious cadences of the Romans, mangled and disfigured by stupid lads and duller ushers—oh ! it would have been such a profanation as the sacred groves of old suffered, when their solemn silence was disturbed by a rude unhallowed throng of Bacchanalians. I should have expired, Doctor ! " I told him, I could not help lamenting such an absurd and morbid sensitiveness ; at which he seemed exceedingly piqued. He possibly thought I should rather have admired than reprobated the lofty tone he assumed. I asked him if the stations, of which

he spoke with such supercilious contempt, had not been joyfully occupied by some of the greatest scholars that had ever lived? He replied simply, with a cold air, that it was his misfortune, not his fault. He told me, however, that his classical acquirements had certainly been capable of something like a profitable employment; for that, about two months before he had called on me, he had nearly come to terms with a bookseller, for publishing a poetical version of the comedies of Aristophanes; that he had nearly completed one, the ΝΕΦΕΛΑΙ, if I recollect right, when the great difficulty of the task, and the wretched remuneration offered, so dispirited him, that he threw it aside in disgust *. His only means of subsistence had been the sorry pay of an occasional read-

* Among his papers I found the following spirited and close version of one of the choral odes in the *Nubes*, commencing,

Ἀμφὶ μοι αὖτε Φοῖβ' ἀναξ
Δήλει, &c.

Thee, too, great Phœbus, I invoke,
Thou Delian King,
Who dwell'st on Cynthia's lofty rock!
Thy passage hither wing,
Blest Goddess! whom Ephesian splendours hold
In temples bright with gold,
'Mid Lydian maidens nobly worshipping!
And thee, our native deity,
Pallas, our city's guardian, thou!
Who wieldst the dreadful Ægis. Thee,
Thee, too, gay Bacchus, from Parnassian height,
Ruddy with festive torches glow—
To crown the sacred choir, I thee invite!

Those who are conversant with the original, will perceive that many of the difficult Greek expressions are rendered into literal English.

er for the press, as well as a contributor to the columns of a daily paper. He had parted with almost the whole of his slender stock of books, his watch, and all his clothes, except what he wore when he called on me. "Did you never try any of the magazines?" I inquired; "for they afford to young men of talent a fair livelihood." He said he had indeed struggled hard to gain a footing in one of the popular periodicals, but that his communications were invariably returned "with polite acknowledgments." One of these notes I saw, and have now in my possession. It was thus:—

"Mr M'—— begs to return the inclosed '*Remarks on English Versions of Euripides*,' with many thanks for the writer's polite offer of it to the E—— M——; but fears that, though an able performance, it is not exactly suited for the readers of the E—— M——.

"*To Δ. Δ.*"

A series of similar disappointments, and the consequent poverty and embarrassment into which he sank, had gradually undermined a constitution naturally feeble; and he told me with much agitation, that had it not been for the trifling, but timely assistance of myself and family, he saw no means of escaping literal starvation! Could I help sympathizing deeply with him? Alas! his misfortunes were very nearly paralleled by my own. While listening to his melancholy details, I seemed living over again the four first wretched years of my professional career.

* * * * *

I must hasten, however, to the closing scene. I had left word with the nurse, that when Mr —— appeared

dying, I should be instantly summoned. About five o'clock, in the evening of the 6th July 18—, I received a message from Mr —— himself, saying that he wished to breathe his last in my presence, as the only friend he had on earth. Unavoidable and pressing professional engagements detained me until half-past six ; and it was seven o'clock before I reached his bedside.

“ Lord, Lord, Doctor, poor Mr —— is dying, sure !” exclaimed the woman of the house, as she opened the door. “ Mrs Jones says he has been picking and clawing the bed-clothes awfully, so he must be dying * !” On entering the room, I found he had dropt asleep. The nurse told me he had been wandering a good deal in his mind. I asked what he had talked about ?

* This very prevalent but absurd notion is not confined to the vulgar ; and as I have, in the course of my practice, met with hundreds of respectable and intelligent people, who have held that a patient's “ *picking and clawing the bed-clothes* ” is a symptom of death, and who, consequently, view it with a kind of superstitious horror, I cannot refrain from explaining the philosophy of it in the simple and satisfactory words of Mr C. Bell † :—

“ It is very common,” he says, “ to see the patient picking the bed-clothes, or catching at the empty air. This proceeds from an appearance of *motes* or *flies* passing before the eyes, and is occasioned by an affection of the retina, producing in it a sensation similar to that produced by the impression of images ; and what is deficient in sensation, the *imagination supplies* : for although the resemblance betwixt those diseased affections of the retina, and the sensation conveyed to the brain, may be very remote, yet, by that slight resemblance, the idea usually associated with the sensation will be excited in the mind.”—*Bell's Anatomy*, vol. iii. pp. 57, 58.

The secret lies in a disordered circulation of the blood, forcing the *red globules* into the minute vessels of the retina.

† Now Sir Charles Bell.

“*Larning*, Doctor,” she replied, “and a proud young lady.” I sat down by his bedside. I saw the dews of death were stealing rapidly over him. His eyes, which were naturally very dark and piercing, were now far sunk into their sockets; his cheeks were hollow, and his hair matted with perspiration over his damp and pallid forehead. While I was gazing silently on the melancholy spectacle, and reflecting what great but undisciplined powers of mind were about soon to be disunited from the body, Mr —— opened his eyes, and, seeing me, said, in a low, but clear and steady tone of voice,—“Doctor—the last act of the tragedy!” He gave me his hand. It was all he could do to lift it into mine. I could not speak—the tears were nearly gushing forth. I felt as if I were gazing on my dying son.

“I have been dreaming, Doctor, since you went,” said he, “and what do you think about? I thought I had squared the circle, and was to perish for ever for my discovery.”

“I hope, Mr ——,” I replied, in a serious tone, and with something of displeasure in my manner—“I hope that, at this awful moment, you have more suitable and consolatory thoughts to occupy your mind with than those?” He sighed. “The clergyman you were so good as to send me,” he said, after a pause, “was here this afternoon. He is a good man, I dare say, but weak, and has his head stuffed with the quibbles of the schools. He wanted to discuss the question of *free will* with a dying man, Doctor!”

“I hope he did not leave you without administering the ordinances of religion?” I inquired.

"He read me some of the church prayers, which were exquisitely touching and beautiful, and the fifteenth chapter of Corinthians, which is very sublime. He could not help giving me a rehearsal of what he was shortly to repeat over my grave!" exclaimed the dying man, with a melancholy smile. I felt some irritation at the light tone of his remarks, but concealed it.

"You received the sacrament, I hope, Mr ——?" He paused a few moments, and his brow was clouded. "No, Doctor, to tell the truth, I declined it——"

"*Declined* the sacrament!" I exclaimed, with surprise.

"Yes—but, dear Doctor, I beg—I entreat you not to ask me about it any farther," replied Mr ——, gloomily, and lapsed into a fit of abstraction for some moments. Unnoticed by him, I despatched the nurse for another clergyman, an excellent and learned man, who was my intimate friend. I was gazing earnestly on Mr ——, as he lay with closed eyes; and was surprised to see the tears trickling from them.

"Mr ——, you have nothing, I hope, on your mind, to render your last moments unhappy?" I asked, in a gentle tone.

"No—nothing material," he replied, with a deep sigh; continuing with his eyes closed, "I was only thinking what a bitter thing it is to be struck down so soon from among the bright throng of the living—to leave this fair, this beautiful world, after so short and sorrowful a sojourn. Oh, it *is* hard!" He shortly opened his eyes. His agitation had apparently passed away, and delirium was hovering over and disarranging his thoughts.

“ Doctor, Doctor, what a strange passage that is,” said he, suddenly, startling me with his altered voice, and the dreamy thoughtful expression of his eyes, “ in the chorus of the *Medea*,—

Ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν χωροῦσι παγαὶ
καὶ δίκαια καὶ πάντα πάλιν στρέφεται.*

Is not there something very mysterious and romantic about these lines? I could never exactly understand what was meant by them.” Finding I continued silent—for I did not wish to encourage his indulging in a train of thought so foreign to his situation—he kept murmuring at intervals, metrically,

Ἄνω ποταμῶν ἱερῶν,

in a most melancholy monotony. He then wandered on from one topic of classical literature to another, till he suddenly stopped short, and turning to me, said, “ Doctor, I am raving very absurdly; I feel I am; but I cannot dismiss from my thoughts, even though I know I am dying, the subjects about which my mind has been occupied nearly all my life through.—Oh!” changing the subject abruptly, “ tell me, Doctor, do those who die of my disorder generally continue in the possession of their intellects to the last?” I told him I thought they generally did.

“ Then I shall burn brightly to the last! Thank God!—And yet,” with a shudder, “ it is shocking, too, to find oneself gradually ceasing to exist.—Doctor, I shall recover.—I am sure I should, if you were to bleed me,” said he. His intellects were wandering.

* Eurip. Med. 411-13.

The nurse now returned, and, to my vexation, unaccompanied by Dr —, who had gone that morning into the country. I did not send for any one else. His frame of mind was peculiar, and very unsatisfactory; but I thought it, on the whole, better not to disturb or irritate him by alluding to a subject he evidently disliked. I ordered candles to be brought, as it was now nearly nine o'clock. "Doctor," said the dying young man, in a feeble tone, "I think you will find a copy of Lactantius lying on my table. He has been a great favourite with me. May I trouble you to read me a passage—the eighth chapter of the seventh book—on the immortality of the soul? I should like to die thoroughly convinced of that noble truth—if truth it is—and I have often read that chapter with much satisfaction." I went to the table and found the book—a pocket copy—the leaves of which were ready turned down to the very page I wanted. I therefore read him slowly and emphatically, the whole of the eighth and ninth chapters, beginning, "*Num est igitur summum bonum immortalitas, ad quam capiendam, et formati a principio, et nati sumus.*" When I had got as far as the allusion to the vacillating views of Cicero, Mr — repeated with me, sighing, the words, "*harum inquit sententiarum, quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit.*"—As an instance of the

Ruling passion, strong in death,

I may mention, though somewhat to my own discredit, that he briskly corrected a false quantity which slipped from me. "Allow me, Doctor,—'*expêtit*,' not '*expêtit*.'" He made no other observation, when

I had concluded reading the chapter from Lactantius, than, "I certainly wish I had early formed fixed principles on religious subjects—but it is now too late." He then dropped asleep, but presently began murmuring very sorrowfully—"Emma, Emma! haughty one! Not *one* look?—I am dying—and you don't know it—nor care for me! * * How beautiful she looked stepping from the carriage! How magnificently dressed! I *think* she saw—*why* can't she love me! She cannot love somebody else—No—madness—no!" In this strain he continued soliloquizing for some minutes longer. It was the first time I had ever heard any thing of the kind fall from him. At length he asked, "I wonder if they ever came to her hands?" as if striving to recollect something. The nurse whispered that she had often heard him talk in the night-time about this lady, and that he would go on till he stopped in tears. I discovered, from a scrap or two found among his papers, after his decease, that the person he addressed as Emma, was a young lady in the higher circles of society, of considerable beauty, whom he first saw by accident, and fancied she had a regard for him. He had, in turn, indulged in the most extravagant and hopeless passion for her. He suspected himself, that she was wholly unconscious of being the object of his almost frenzied admiration. When he was asking "if something came to her hands," I have no doubt he alluded to some copy of verses he had sent to her, of which the following fragments, written in pencil, on a blank leaf of his Aristophanes, probably formed a part. There is some merit in them, but more extravagance.

I could go through the world with thee,
To spend with thee eternity !

* * * *

To see thy blue and passionate eye,
Light on an another scornfully,
But fix its melting glance on me,
And blend——

Read the poor heart that throbs for thee,
Imprint all o'er with thy dear name—
Yet withering 'neath a lonely flame,
That warms *thee* not, yet me consumes !

* * * *

Ay, I would have thee all my own,
Thy love, thy life, mine, *mine* alone ;
See nothing in the world but me,
Since nought *I* know, or love, but thee !

The eyes that on a thousand fall,
I would collect their glances all,
And fling their lustre on my soul,
Till it imbibed, absorb'd the whole.

These are followed by several more lines ; but the above will suffice. This insane attachment was exactly what I might have expected from one of his ardent and enthusiastic temperament. To return, however, once more. Towards eleven o'clock, he began to fail rapidly. I had my fingers on his pulse, which beat very feebly, almost imperceptibly. He opened his eyes slowly, and gazed upwards with a vacant air.

“ Why are you taking the candles away, nurse ? ” he inquired faintly. They had not been touched. His cold fingers gently compressed my hand—they were stiffening with death. “ Don't, *don't* put the candles

out, Doctor," he commenced again, looking at me, with an eye on which the thick mists and shadows of the grave were settling fast—they were filmy and glazed.

"Don't blow them out—don't—don't!" he again exclaimed, almost inaudibly.

"No, we will not! My dear Mr —, both candles are burning brightly beside you on the table," I replied tremulously—for I saw the senses were forgetting their functions—that life and consciousness were fast retiring!

"Well," he murmured almost inarticulately, "I am now quite in darkness! Oh, there is something at my heart—cold, cold! *Doctor, keep them off!** Why—oh, death"—He ceased. He had spoken his last on earth. The intervals of respiration became gradually longer and longer; and the precise moment when he ceased to breathe at all could not be ascertained. Yes; it was all over. Poor Mr — was dead. I shall never forget him.

* I once before heard these strange words fall from the lips of a dying patient—a lady. To me they suggest very unpleasant, I may say, fearful thoughts. *What* is to be kept off?

[This note has called forth an angry commentary from the able Editor of the Spectator newspaper, who heads the paragraph of which I complain, with the words—"Injudicious Sanction of Superstitious Terrors." I feel satisfied that the writer, on a reconsideration of what he has there expressed, will be disposed to withdraw his censures. True—a dying man may often utter "unintelligible gibberish:" but if we find *several* dying persons, of *different* characters and situations, concur in uttering, in their last moments, *the same words*,—is it so unwarrantable for an observer to hazard an *inquiry* concerning their possible import? There is a lecture of Sir Henry Hallford, lately published, which contains some highly pertinent and interesting observations on the subject. I beg to refer the reader to it.]

CHAPTER V.

PREPARING FOR THE HOUSE!

“ Do, dear Doctor, be so good as to drop in at —— Place, in the course of the morning, *by accident*,—for I want you to see Mr ——. He has, I verily believe, bid adieu to his senses, for he is conducting himself very strangely. To tell you the truth, he is resolved on going down to the House this evening, for the purpose of speaking on the —— bill, and will, I fear, act so absurdly, as to make himself the laughing-stock of the whole country—at least I suspect as much, from what I have heard of his preparations. Ask to be shown up at once to Mr ——, when you arrive, and gradually direct the conversation to politics—when you will soon see what is the matter. But mind, Doctor, not a word of this note! Your visit will be quite *accidental*, you know. Believe me, my dear Doctor, yours,” &c. &c.—Such was the note put into my hands by a servant, as my carriage was driving off on my first morning round. I knew Mrs ——, the fair writer of it, very intimately,—as, indeed, the familiar and confi-

dential strain of her note will suffice to show. She was a very amiable and clever woman, and would not have complained, I was sure, without reason. Wishing, therefore, to oblige her, by a prompt attention to her request, and in the full expectation, from what I knew of the worthy Member's eccentricities, of encountering some singular scene, I directed the horse's heads to be turned towards —— Place. I reached the house about twelve o'clock, and went up stairs at once to the drawing-room, where I understood Mr —— had taken up quarters for the day. The servant opened the door and announced me.

“ Oh—shew Dr —— in.” I entered. The object of my visit, I may just say, was the very *beau ideal* of a County Member; somewhat inclined to corpulency, with a fine, fresh, rubicund, good-natured face, and that bluff old English frankness of manner, which flings you back into the age of Sir Röger de Coverley. He was dressed in a long, grey woollen morning-gown; and, with his hands crammed into the hind pockets, was pacing rapidly to and fro from one end of the spacious room to the other. At one extremity was a table, on which lay a sheet of foolscap, closely written, and crumpled as if with constant handling, his gold repeater, and a half-emptied decanter of sherry, with a wine glass. A glance at all these paraphernalia convinced me of the nature of Mr ——'s occupation; he was committing his *speech* to memory!

“ How d'ye do, how d'ye do, Doctor?” he exclaimed, in a hearty but hurried tone; “ you must not keep me long: busy—very busy indeed, Doctor.” I had looked in by accident, I assured him, and did not intend to

detain him an instant. I remarked that I supposed he was busy preparing for the House.

“ Ah, right, Doctor—right! Ay, by ——! and a grand hit it will be, too!—I shall peg it into them to-night, Doctor! I’ll let them know what an English County Member is! I’ll make the House too hot to hold them!” said Mr ——, walking to and fro, at an accelerated pace. He was evidently boiling over with excitement.

“ You are going to speak to-night, then, on the great —— question, I suppose?” said I, hardly able to repress a smile.

“ Speak, Doctor? I’ll burst on them with such a view-halloo as shall startle the whole pack! *I’ll* shew my Lord —— what kind of stuff I’m made of—I will, by ——! He was pleased to tell the House, the other evening—curse his impudence!—that the two Members for ——shire were a mere couple of dumb-bells—he did, by ——! But *I’ll* show him whether or not *I*, for one of them, am to be jeered and flamm’d with impunity! Ha, Doctor, what d’ye think of this?” said he, hurrying to the table, and taking up the manuscript I have mentioned. He was going to read it to me, but suddenly stopped short, and laid it down again on the table, exclaiming. “ Nay, I must know it off by this time—so listen! have at ye, Doctor!”

After a pompous hem! hem! he commenced, and with infinite energy and boisterousness of manner, recited the whole oration. It was certainly a wonderful—a matchless performance—parcelled out with a rigid adherence to the rules of ancient rhetoric. As he proceeded, he recited such astounding absurdities—such

preposterous Bombastes-furioso declamations—as, had they been uttered in the House, would assuredly have procured the triumphant speaker six or seven rounds of convulsive laughter! Had I not known well the simplicity and sincerity—the perfect *bonhomie*—of Mr ———, I should have supposed he was hoaxing me; but I assuredly suspected he was *himself* the hoaxed party—the joking-post of some witty wag who had determined to afford the House a night's sport at poor Mr ———'s expense! Indeed, I never in my life listened to such pitifully puerile—such almost idiotic *gallimatia*. I felt certain it could never have been the composition of fox-hunting Mr ———! There was a hackneyed quotation from Horace—from the Septuagint, (!) and from Locke; and then a scampering through the whole flowery realms of rhetorical ornament—and a glancing at every topic of foreign or domestic policy that could conceivably attract the attention of the most erratic fancy. In short, there surely never before was such a speech composed since the world began! And this was the sort of thing that poor Mr ——— actually intended to deliver that memorable evening in the House of Commons! As for myself, I could not control my risible faculties; but accompanied the peroration with a perfect shout of laughter! Mr ——— laid down the paper (which he had twisted into a sort of a scroll) in an ecstasy, and joined me in full chorus, slapping me on the shoulder, and exclaiming—“ Ah! d—— it! Doctor, I *knew* you would like it! It's just the thing—isn't it? There will be no standing me at the next election for ———shire, if I can only deliver all this in the House to-night! Old Turnpenny, that's going to start against

me, backed by the manufacturing interest, won't come up—and you see if he does!—Curse it! I thought it was *in* me, and would come *out* some of these days. They shall have it all to-night—they shall, by ——! Only be on the look-out for the morning papers, Doctor—that's all!" and he set off, walking rapidly, with long strides, from one end of the room to the other. I began to be apprehensive that there was too much ground for Mrs ——'s suspicions, that he had literally "taken leave of his senses." Recollecting, at length, the object of my visit, which the amusing exhibition I have been attempting to describe had almost driven from my memory, I endeavoured to think, on the spur of the moment, of some scheme for diverting him from his purpose, and preventing the lamentable exposure he was preparing for himself. I could think of nothing else than attacking him on a sore point—one on which he had been hipped for years, and not without reason,—an hereditary tendency to apoplexy.

"But, my dear sir," said I, "this excitement will destroy you—you will bring on a fit of apoplexy, if you go on for an hour longer in this way—you will indeed!" He stood still, changed colour a little, and stammered, "What! eh, d—— it!—apoplexy! you don't say so, Doctor? Hem! how is my pulse?" extending his wrist. I felt it—looked at my watch, and shook my head.

"Eh—what, Doctor! *Newmarket*, eh?" said he, with an alarmed air—meaning to ask me whether his pulse was beating rapidly.

"It is indeed, Mr ——. It beats upwards of one hundred and fifteen a minute," I replied, still keeping

my fingers at his wrist, and my eyes rivetted on my watch—for I dared not trust myself with looking in his countenance. He started from me without uttering a syllable; hurried to the table, poured out a glass of wine, and gulped it down instantly. I suppose he caught an unfortunate smile or a smirk on my face, for he came up to me, and in a coaxing but disturbed manner, said, “Now, come, come, Doctor—Doctor, no humbug! I feel well enough all over! D—— it, I *will* speak in the House to-night, come what may, that’s flat! Why, there’ll be a general election in a few months, and it’s of consequence for me to do something—to make a figure in the House. Besides, it is a great constitutional”——

“Well, well, Mr ——, undoubtedly you must please yourself,” said I, seriously; “but if a fit *should*—you’ll remember I did my duty, and warned you how to avert it!”—“Hem, ahem!” he ejaculated, with a somewhat puzzled air. I thought I had succeeded in shaking his purpose. I was, however, too sanguine in my expectations. “I must bid you good morning, Doctor,” said he abruptly, “I *must* speak! I *will* try it to-night, at all events;—but I’ll be calm—I will! And if I *should* die—but—devil take it—that’s *impossible*, you know! But if I should—why, it will be a martyr’s death; I shall die a patriot—ha, ha, ha! Good morning, Doctor!” He led me to the door, laughing, as he went, but not so heartily or boisterously as formerly. I was hurrying down stairs, when Mr —— re-opened the drawing-room door, and called out, “Doctor, Doctor, just be so good as to look in on my good lady before you go. She’s somewhere about the house—in her

boudoir, I dare say. She's not quite well this morning—a fit of the vapours—hem! You understand me, Doctor?" putting his finger to the side of his nose, with a wise air. I could not help smiling at the reciprocal anxiety for each other's health simultaneously manifested by this worthy couple.

"Well, Doctor, am not I right?" exclaimed Mrs — in a low tone, opening the dining-room door, and beckoning me in.

"Yes, indeed, madam. My interview was little else than a running commentary on your note to me."

"How did you find him engaged, Doctor?—Learning his *speech*, as he calls it—eh?" inquired the lady, with a chagrined air, which was heightened when I recounted what had passed up stairs.

"Oh, absurd! monstrous! Doctor, I am ready to expire with vexation to see Mr — acting so foolishly!—'Tis all owing to that odious Dr —, our village rector, who is up in town now, and an immense crony of Mr —'s. I suspected there was something brewing between them; for they have been laying their wise heads together for a week past. Did not he repeat *the speech* to you, Doctor?—the whole of it?"

"Yes, indeed, madam, he did," I replied, smiling at the recollection.

"Ah—hideous rant it was, I dare say!—I'll tell you a secret, Doctor. I know it was every word composed by that abominable old addlehead, Dr —, a doodle that he is!—(I wonder what brought him up from his parish!)—And it is he that has inflamed Mr —'s fancy with making '*a great hit*' in the House, as they call it. That precious piece of stuff which they call a

speech, poor Mr —— has been learning for this week past ; and has several times woke me in the night with ranting snatches of it." I begged Mrs —— not to take it so seriously.

" Now, tell me candidly, Dr ——, did you ever hear such horrible nonsense in your life ? It is all that country parson's trash, collected by bits out of his old stupid sermons ! I'm sure our name will run the gauntlet of all the papers in England, for a fortnight to come !" I said, I was sorry to be compelled to acquiesce in the truth of what she was saying.

" Really," she continued, pressing her hand to her forehead, " I feel quite poorly myself, with agitation at the thought of to-night's farce. Did you attempt to dissuade him ? You might have frightened him with a hint or two about his tendency to apoplexy, you know."

" I did my utmost, madam, I assure you ; and certainly startled him not a little. But, alas, he rallied, and good-humouredly sent me from the room, telling me, that, if the effort of speaking killed him, he should share the fate of Lord Chatham, or something of that sort."

" Preposterous !" exclaimed Mrs ——, almost shedding tears with vexation. " But, *entre nous*, Doctor, could not you think of any thing—hem !—something in the medical way—to prevent his going to the House to-night ?—A—a sleeping draught—eh, Doctor ?"

" Really, my dear madam," said I, seriously, " I should not feel justified in going so far as that."

" Oh, dear, dear Doctor, what possible harm can there be in it ? Do consent to my wishes for once, and I shall be eternally obliged to you. Do order a simple

sleeping draught—strong enough to keep him in bed till five or six o'clock in the morning—and I will myself slip it into his wine at dinner.”—In short, there was no resisting the importunities and distress of so fine a woman as Mrs —— ; so I ordered about five-and-thirty drops of laudanum, in a little syrup and water. But, alas, this scheme was frustrated by Mr ——’s, two hours afterwards, unexpectedly ordering the carriage (while Mrs —— was herself gone to procure his *quietus*), and leaving word he should dine with some Members that evening at Brookes’s. After all, however, a lucky accident accomplished Mrs ——’s wishes, though it deprived her husband of that opportunity of seizing the laurels of parliamentary eloquence ; for the ministry, finding the measure against which Mr —— had intended to level his oration, to be extremely unpopular, and anticipating that they should be dead beat, wisely postponed it *sine die*.

CHAPTER VI.

DUELLING*.

I HAD been invited by young Lord ——, the nobleman mentioned in my first chapter, to spend the latter part of my last college vacation with his Lordship at his shooting box † in ——shire. As his destined profes-

* The melancholy facts on which the ensuing narrative is founded, I find entered in the Diary as far back as nearly twenty-five years ago ; and I am convinced, after some little inquiry, that there is no one now living whose feelings could be shocked by its perusal.

† —“ résidences temporaires nommées, *Shooting boxes*,” says the French Translator, adding in a note “ *Loges-de-Chasse ; rendezvous de chasse.*” I cannot resist transcribing part of the French *text*, in which I am made to talk thus :—“ Shooting boxes sont le rendezvous ordinaire de gens de bon ton, que la vie monotone de leurs tourelles gothiques et la vie brillante de Londres ont fatigués, pendant l’été, et pendant l’hiver. C’est là que les goûts de la jeune noblesse Anglaise se développent avec le plus d’énergie. Lord Byron, dans Newstead Abbey, fut un exemple remarquable de ce genre d’existence pugilistique, chasseresse, libertine, buveuse, assurément fort plus morale, opposée à la délicatesse des mœurs, mais vive, amusante, entraînant, étourdissant, et où la morgue aristocratique, se dépouillant enfin de ses privilèges et de ses ridicules, rentre dans toute l’indépendance sauvage, et ne se distingue de la roture que par l’extrême véhémence des excès qui l’entraînent.”

sion was the army, he had already a tolerably numerous retinue of military friends, several of whom were engaged to join us on our arrival at — ; so that we anticipated a very gay and jovial season. Our expectations were not disappointed. What with shooting, fishing, and riding, abroad—billiards, songs, and high *feeding*, at home, our days and nights glided as merrily away as fun and frolic could make them. One of the many schemes of amusement devised by our party, was giving a sort of military subscription ball at the small town of —, from which we were distant not more than four or five miles. All my Lord —'s party, of course, were to be there, as well as several others of his friends, scattered at a little distance from him in the country. On the appointed day all went off admirably. The little town of — absolutely reeled beneath the unusual excitement of music, dancing, and universal fêting. It was, in short, a sort of miniature carnival, which the inhabitants, for several reasons, but more especially the melancholy one I am going to mention, have not yet forgotten. It is not very wonderful, that all the rustic beauty of the place was there. Many a village belle was there, in truth, panting and fluttering with delighted agitation at the unusual attentions of their handsome and agreeable partners ; for there was not a young military member of our party but merited the epithets. As for myself, being cursed—as I once before hinted—with a very insignificant person, and not the most attractive or communicative manners ; being utterly incapable of pouring that soft delicious nonsense—that fascinating, searching, small-talk, which has stolen so often right through a lady's ear, into the very centre

of her heart ; being no adept, I say, at this, I contented myself with dancing a set or two with a young woman, whom nobody else seemed inclined to lead out ; and continued, for the rest of the evening, more a *spectator* than a partaker of the gaieties of the scene. There was one girl there—the daughter of a reputable retired tradesman—of singular beauty, and known in the neighbourhood by the name of “ *The Blue Bell of ———**.” Of course, she was the object of universal admiration, and literally besieged the whole evening with applications for “ the honour of her hand.” I do not exaggerate, when I say, that, in my opinion, this young woman was perfectly beautiful. Her complexion was of dazzling purity and transparency—her symmetrical features of a placid bust-like character, which, however, would perhaps have been considered insipid, had it not been for a brilliant pair of large, languishing, blue eyes, resembling

—— blue water-lilies, when the breeze
Maketh the crystal waters round them tremble,

which it was almost madness to look upon. And then her light auburn hair, which hung in loose and easy curls on each cheek like soft golden clouds flitting past the moon ! Her figure was in keeping with her countenance,—slender, graceful, and delicate, with a most exquisitely-turned foot and ankle. I have spent so many words about her description, because I have never since seen any woman that I thought equalled her ; and because her beauty occasioned the wretched catastrophe I am about to relate.

She rivetted the attention of all our party, except my

“ *Surnommée, la Violette de Hazledon !*”—*French Translator.*

young host Lord ——, who adhered all the evening to a sweet creature he had selected on first entering the room. I observed, however, one of our party, a dashing young Captain in the Guards, highly connected, and of handsome and prepossessing person and manners, and a gentleman, of nearly equal personal pretensions, who had been invited from —— Hall, his father's seat, —to exceed every one present in their attentions to sweet Mary ——; and as she occasionally smiled on one or the other of the rivals, I saw the countenance of either alternately clouded with displeasure. Captain —— was soliciting her hand for the last set—a country dance—when his rival (whom, for distinction's sake, I shall call *Trevor*, though that, of course, is very far from his real name), stepping up to her, seized her hand, and said, in rather a sharp and quick tone, “ Captain ——, she has promised me the last set; I beg, therefore, you will resign her.—I am right, Miss ——?” he enquired of the girl, who blushing replied, “ I think I did promise Mr Trevor—but I would dance with both, if I could. Captain, you are not angry with me; are you?” she smiled, appealingly.

“ Certainly not, madam,” he replied, with a peculiar emphasis; and, after directing an eye, which kindled like a star, to his more successful rival, retired haughtily a few paces, and soon afterwards left the room. A strong conviction seized me, that even this small and trifling incident would be attended with mischief between those two fierce and undisciplined spirits; for I occasionally saw Mr Trevor turn a moment from his beautiful partner, and cast a stern inquiring glance round the room, as if in search of Captain ——. I saw he had

noticed the haughty frown with which the Captain had retired.

Most of the gentlemen who had accompanied Lord —— to this ball were engaged to dine with him the next Sunday evening. Mr Trevor and the Captain (who, I think I mentioned, was staying a few days with his Lordship) would meet at this party; and I determined to watch their demeanour. Captain —— was at the window, when Mr Trevor, on horseback, attended by his groom, alighted at the door; and, on seeing who it was, walked away to another part of the room, with an air of assumed indifference; but I caught his quick and restless glance involuntarily directed towards the door through which Mr Trevor would enter. They saluted each other with civility—rather coldly, I thought—but there was nothing particularly marked in the manner of either. About twenty sat down to dinner. All promised to go off well—for the cooking was admirable, the wines first-rate, and the conversation brisk and various. Captain —— and Mr Trevor were seated at some distance from each other—the former being my next neighbour. The cloth was not removed till a few minutes after eight, when dessert with a fresh and large supply of wine was introduced. The late ball, of course, was a prominent topic of conversation; and after a few of the usual bachelor toasts had been drunk with noisy enthusiasm, and we all felt the elevating influence of the wine we had been drinking, Lord —— motioned silence, and said,—“Now, my dear fellows, I have a toast in my eye that will delight you all—so, bumpers, gentlemen—bumpers!—up to the very brim and over—to make *sure* your glasses are full—while I propose to you the

health of a beautiful—nay, by —— ! the most beautiful girl we have any of us seen for this year—Ha ! I see all anticipate me—so, to be short, here is the health of Mary ——, the Blue Bell of —— !” It was drunk with acclamation. I thought I perceived Captain ——’s hand, however, shake a little, as he lifted his glass to his mouth.

“ Who is to return thanks for her ?”—“ The chosen one, to be sure !”—“ Who is he ?”—“ Legs—rise—legs—whoever he is !” was shouted, asked, and answered in a breath. “ Oh ! Trevor is the happy swain—there’s no doubt of that—he monopolized her all the evening—I could not get her hand once,” exclaimed one near Mr Trevor. “ Nor I”—“ Nor I”—echoed several. Mr Trevor looked with a delighted and triumphant air round the room, and seemed about to rise, but there was a cry, —“ No !—Trevor is not the man—I say Captain —— is the favourite !”—“ Ay—ten to one on the Captain !” roared a young hero of Ascot. “ Stuff—stuff !” muttered the Captain hurriedly cutting an apple to fritters, and now and then casting a fierce glance towards Mr Trevor. There were many noisy maintainers of both Trevor and the Captain.

“ Come, come, gentlemen,” said a young Cornish Baronet, good-humouredly, seeing the two young men appeared to view the affair very seriously, “ the best way, since I dare be sworn the girl herself does not know which she likes best, will be to *toss up* who shall be given the credit of her beau !” A loud laugh followed this droll proposal ; in which all joined except Trevor and the Captain. The latter had poured out some claret while Sir —— was speaking, and sipped it with an air of assumed carelessness. I observed, however, that he never removed his eye from

his glass; and that his face was pale, as if from some strong internal emotion. Mr Trevor's demeanour, however, also indicated considerable embarrassment; but he was older than the Captain, and had much more command of manner. I was amazed, for my own part, to see them take up such an insignificant affair so seriously; but these things generally involve so much of the strong passions of our youthful nature, especially our vanity and jealousy, that, on second thoughts, my surprise abated.

"I certainly fancied you were the favourite, Captain; for I saw her blush with satisfaction when you squeezed her hand," I whispered. "You are right, ——," he answered, with a forced smile. "I don't think Trevor can have any pretensions to her favour." The noisiness of the party was now subsiding, and, nobody knew why, an air of blank embarrassment seemed to pervade all present.

"Upon my honour, gentlemen, this is a vastly silly affair altogether, and quite unworthy such a stir as it has excited," said Mr Trevor; "but as so much notice *has* been taken of it, I cannot help saying, though it is childishly absurd, perhaps, that I think the beautiful 'Blue Bell' of ——' is mine—mine alone! I believe I have good ground for saying I am the sole winner of the prize, and have distanced my military competitor," continued Mr Trevor, turning to Captain ——, with a smiling air, which was very foreign to his real feelings, "though his bright eyes—his debonair demeanour—that fascinating *je ne sais quoi* of his"——

"Trevor! don't be insolent!" exclaimed the Captain sternly, reddening with passion.

"*Insolent!* Captain?" inquired Trevor, with an amazed air—"What the deuce do you mean? I'm sure you

don't want to quarrel with me—oh, it's impossible! If I have said what was offensive, by ——, I did not mean it; and, as we said at Rugby, *indictum puta*—and there's an end of it. But as for my sweet little Blue Bell, I know—am perfectly certain—ay, spite of the Captain's dark looks—that I am the happy man. So, gentlemen, *de jure* and *de facto*—for her, I return you thanks." He sat down. There was so much kindness in his manner, and he had so handsomely disavowed any intentions of hurting Captain ——'s feelings, that I hoped the young Hotspur beside me was quieted. Not so, however.

"Trevor," said he, in a hurried tone, "you are mistaken—you are, by ——! You don't know what passed between Mary —— and myself that evening. On my word and honour, she told me she wished she could be off her engagement with you."

"Nonsense! nonsense! She must have said it to amuse you, Captain—she *could* have had no other intention. The very next morning she told me"——

"The very next morning!" shouted Captain ——, "why, what the —— could you have wanted with Mary —— the next morning?"

"That is my affair, Captain—not yours. And since you *will* have it out, I tell you for your consolation, that Mary and I have met every day since!" said Mr Trevor loudly—even vehemently. He was getting a little *flustered*, as the phrase is, with wine, which he was pouring down glass after glass, else of course he could never have made such an absurd—such an unusual disclosure.

"Trevor, I must say you act very meanly in telling us—if it really is so," said the Captain, with an intense-

ly chagrined and mortified air ; “ and if you intend to ruin that sweet and innocent creature, I shall take leave to say, that you are a—a—a—curse on it, it WILL out—a villain !” continued the Captain, slowly and deliberately. My heart flew up to my throat, where it fluttered as though it would have choked me. There was an instant and dead silence.

“ A *villain*—did you say, Captain ? and accuse me of meanness ?” inquired Mr Trevor, coolly, while the colour suddenly faded from his darkening features ; and, rising from his chair, he stepped forward, and stood nearly opposite to the Captain, with his half-emptied glass in his hand, which, however, was not observed by him he addressed. “ Yes, sir, I *did* say so,” replied the Captain firmly—“ and what then ?”

“ Then, of course, you will see the necessity of apologizing for it instantly,” rejoined Mr Trevor.

“ As I am not in the habit, Mr Trevor, of saying what requires an apology, I have none to offer,” said Captain —, drawing himself up in his chair, and eyeing Mr Trevor with a steady look of haughty composure.

“ Then, Captain, don’t expect me to apologize for *this* !” thundered Mr Trevor, at the same time hurling his glass, wine and all, at the Captain’s head. Part of the wine fell on me, but the glass glanced at the ear of Captain —, and cut it slightly ; for he had started aside on seeing Mr Trevor’s intention. A mist seemed to cover my eyes, as I saw every one present rising from his chair. The room was, of course, in an uproar. The two who had quarrelled were the only calm persons present. Mr Trevor remained standing on the same spot with his arms folded on his breast ; while Captain —

calmly wiped off the stains of wine from his shirt-ruffles and white waistcoat, walked up to Lord ——, who was at but a yard or two's distance, and inquired, in a low tone of voice, "Your Lordship has pistols here, of course? We had better settle this little matter now, and here. Captain V——, you will kindly do what is necessary for me?"

"My dear fellow, be calm! This is really a very absurd quarrel—likely to be a dreadful business, though!" replied his Lordship with great agitation.

"Come, shake hands, and be friends! Come, don't let a trumpery dinner brawl lead to bloodshed—and in my house, too! Make it up like men of sense"——

"That, your Lordship of course knows as well as I do, is impossible. Will you, Captain V——, be good enough to bring the pistols? You will find them in his Lordship's shooting gallery—we had better adjourn there, by the way, eh?" inquired the Captain, coolly—He had seen many of these *affaires*!

"Then, bring them—bring them, by all means."

"In God's name, let this quarrel be settled on the spot!" exclaimed ——, and ——, and ——.

"We all know they *must* fight—that's as clear as the sun—so the sooner the better!" exclaimed the Honourable Mr ——, a hot-headed cousin of Lord ——'s.

"Eternal curses on the silly slut!" groaned his Lordship; "here will be bloodshed for her!—My dear Trevor!" said he, hurrying to that gentleman, who, with seven or eight people round him, was conversing on the affair with perfect composure; do, I implore—I beg—I supplicate, that you would leave my house! Oh! don't let it be said I ask people here to kill one another! Why

may not this wretched business be made up?—By ——, it *shall* be,” said he, vehemently; and, putting his arm into that of Mr Trevor, he endeavoured to draw him towards the spot where Captain —— was standing.

“Your Lordship is very good, but it’s useless,” replied Mr Trevor, struggling to disengage his arm from that of Lord —— . “Your Lordship knows the business *must* be settled, and the sooner the better. My friend Sir —— has undertaken to do what is correct on the occasion. Come,” addressing the young Baronet, “come away, and join Captain V——.” All this was uttered with *real* nonchalance! Somebody present told him, that the Captain was one of the best shots in England—could hit a sixpence at ten yards’ distance. “Can he, by ——?” said he with a smile, without evincing the slightest symptoms of trepidation. “Why, then, I may as well make my will, for I’m as blind as a mole!—Ha! I have it.” He walked out from among those who were standing round him, and strode up to Captain ——, who was conversing earnestly with one or two of his brother officers.

“Captain ——,” said Mr Trevor, sternly, extending his right hand, with his glove half drawn on. The Captain turned suddenly towards him with a furious scowl. “I am told you are a dead shot—eh?”

“Well, sir, and what of that?” inquired the Captain, haughtily, and with some curiosity in his countenance.

“You know I am short-sighted,—blind as a beetle,—and not very well versed in shooting matters”—— Every one present started, and looked with surprise and displeasure at the speaker; and one muttered in my ear

—“ Eh?—d——!—Trevor showing the white feather? I *am* astonished!”

“ Why, what *can* you mean by all this, sir?” inquired the Captain, with a contemptuous sneer.

“ Oh, merely that we ought not to fight on unequal terms. Do you think, my good sir, I will stand to be shot at without having a chance of returning the favour? I have to say, therefore, merely, that since this quarrel is of your own seeking—and your own infernal folly only has brought it about—I shall insist on our fighting breast to breast—muzzle to muzzle—and across a table. Yes,” he continued, elevating his voice to nearly a shout; “ we will go down to hell together—if we go at all—that is *some* consolation.”

“ Infamous!”—“ Monstrous!” was echoed from all present. They would not, they said, hear of such a thing—they would not stand to see such butchery! Eight or ten left the room abruptly, and did not return. Captain —— made no reply to Trevor’s proposal, but was conversing anxiously with his friends.

“ *Now*, sir, who is the coward?” inquired Mr Trevor, sarcastically.

“ A few moments will show,” replied the Captain, stepping forward, with no sign of agitation, except a countenance of an ashy hue; “ for I accede to your terms—ruffianly—murderous as they are; and may the curse of a ruined house overwhelm you and your family for ever!” faltered Captain ——, who saw, of course, that certain death was before both. “ Are the pistols preparing?” inquired Mr Trevor, without regarding the exclamation of Captain ——. He was answered in the

affirmative, that Captain V—— and Sir —— were both absent on that errand. It was agreed that the dreadful affair should take place in the shooting gallery, where their noise would be less likely to alarm the servants. It is hardly necessary to repeat the exclamations of “Murder!—downright, savage, deliberate murder!” which burst from all around. Two gentlemen left abruptly, saddled their horses, and galloped after peace-officers; while Lord ——, who was almost distracted, hurried, accompanied by several gentlemen and myself, to the shooting gallery, leaving the Captain and a friend in the dining room, while Mr Trevor, with another, betook themselves to the shrubbery walk. His Lordship informed Captain V—— and the Baronet of the dreadful nature of the combat that had been determined on since they had left the room. They both threw down the pistols they were in the act of loading, and, horror-struck, swore they would have no concern whatever in such a barbarous and bloody transaction. A sudden suggestion of Lord ——’s however was adopted. They agreed, after much hesitation, and doubt as to the success of the project, to charge the pistols with powder only, and put them into the hands of the Captain and Mr Trevor, as though they were loaded with ball. Lord —— was sanguine enough to suppose that, when they had both stood fire, and indisputably proved their courage, the affair might be settled amicably. As soon as the necessary preparations were completed, and two dreary lights were placed in the shooting gallery, both the hostile parties were summoned. As it was well known that I was preparing for the medical profession, my services were put into requisition for both.

“ But have you any instruments or bandages ?” inquired some one.

“ It is of little consequence—we are not likely to want them ; I think, if our pistols do their duty,” said Mr Trevor, with a smile that to me seemed ghastly.

But a servant was mounted on the fleetest horse in Lord ——’s stable, and despatched for the surgeon, who resided at not more than half a mile’s distance, with a note, requesting him to come furnished with the necessary instruments for a gun-shot wound. As the principals were impatient, and the seconds, as well as the others present, were in the secret of the blank charge in the pistols, and anticipated nothing like bloodshed, the pistols were placed in the hands of each, in dead silence, and the two parties, with their respective friends, retired to a little distance from each other.

“ Are you prepared, Mr Trevor ?” inquired one of Captain ——’s party ; and, being answered in the affirmative, in a moment after the two principals, pistol in hand, approached one another. Though I was almost blinded with agitation, and was, in common with those around, quaking for the success of our scheme, my eyes were rivetted on their every movement. There was something fearfully impressive in their demeanour. Though stepping to certain death, as they supposed, there was not the slightest symptom of terror or agitation visible—no swaggering—no affectation of a calmness they did not feel. The countenance of each was deadly pale and damp ; but not a muscle trembled.

“ Who is to give us the word ?” asked the Captain, in a whisper, which, though low, was heard all over the room ; “ for, in this sort of affair, if one fires a second

before the other, he is a murderer." At that moment there was a noise heard; it was the surgeon who had arrived, and now entered breathless. "Step out, and give the word at once," said Mr Trevor impatiently. Both the Captain and Mr Trevor returned and shook hands with a melancholy smile with their friends, and then retook their places. The gentleman who was to give the signal then stepped towards them, and closing his eyes with his hands, said, in a tremulous tone, "Raise your pistols!"—the muzzles were instantly touching one another's breasts—"and, when I have counted three, fire. One—two—three!"—They fired—both recoiled with the shock several paces, and their friends rushed forward.

"Why, what is the meaning of this!" exclaimed both in a breath. "Who has dared to mock us in this way? There were no balls in the pistols!" exclaimed Trevor, fiercely. Lord —— and the seconds explained the well-meant artifice, and received an indignant curse for their pains. It was in vain we all implored them to be reconciled, as each had done amply sufficient to vindicate his honour. Trevor almost gnashed his teeth with fury. There was something fiendish, I thought, in the expression of his countenance. "It is easily remedied," said Captain ——, as his eye caught several small swords hanging up. He took down two, measured them, and proffered one to his antagonist, who clutched it eagerly.—"There *can* be no deception here, however," he gasped; "and now"—each put himself into posture—"stand off there!"

We fell back, horror-struck at the relentless and revengeful spirit with which they seemed animated. I do

not know which was the better swordsman ; I recollect only seeing a rapid glancing of their weapons, flashing about like sparks of fire, and a hurrying about in all directions, which lasted for several moments, when one of them fell. It was the Captain ; for the strong and skillful arm of Mr Trevor had thrust his sword nearly up to the hilt in the side of his antagonist. His very heart was cloven ! The unfortunate young man fell without uttering a groan—his sword dropped from his grasp, he pressed his right hand to his heart, and with a quivering motion of the lips, as though struggling to speak, expired ! “ Oh, my great God ! ” exclaimed Trevor, in a broken and hollow tone, with a face so blanched and horror-stricken, that it froze my very blood to look upon, “ what have I done ? *Can all this be REAL !* ” He continued on his knees by the side of his fallen antagonist, with his hands clasped convulsively, and his eyes glaring upwards for several moments.

* * * * *

A haze of horror is spread over that black transaction ; and if it is dissipated for an instant, when my mind's eye suddenly looks back through the vista of years, the scene seems only the gloomy representation, or picture, of some occurrence, which I cannot persuade myself that I *actually witnessed*. To this hour, when I advert to it, I am not free from fits of incredulousness. The affair created a great ferment at the time. The unhappy survivor (who in this narrative has passed under the name of Trevor) instantly left England, and died, about five years afterwards, in the south of France, in truth, broken-hearted.—In a word, since that day, I have never seen men entering into discussion, when warm-

ed with wine, and approaching never so slowly towards the confines of personality, without reverting, with a shudder, to the trifling—the utterly insignificant—circumstances, which wine and the hot passions of youth kindled into the fatal brawl which cost poor Captain —— his life, and drove Mr —— abroad, to die a broken-hearted exile!

CHAPTER VII.

INTRIGUING AND MADNESS.

NOTE TO THE EDITOR OF BLACKWOOD *.—Sir Christopher,—A letter under the title of “ *Blackwood’s Magazine v. the Secrets of the Medical Profession*,” appeared in the *Lancet* of the 28th August last—“ the most influential and popular organ,” it says, “ the profession possesses,”—a paragraph from which I beg to extract, and call the attention of your numerous readers to it. I do this in justice to myself; because, in the event of my name, insignificant perhaps as it is, happening to be disclosed, the said letter is calculated to work me much prejudice with my professional brethren, and also with the public in general; for I need not tell you, Sir Christopher, of the extensive and miscellaneous circulation of the publication alluded to. After some complimentary remarks, the writer proceeds :—

* As considerable currency has been given to the objections which called forth this answer, I have retained it as a sort of standing defence.

“ But I enter my protest, as a physician in some little practice, against the *custom of disclosing to the public the sacred secrets which are communicated to us in perfect confidence by our patients and ought to be preserved inviolable*. The Editor of Blackwood happily enough says, ‘ what periodical has *sunk a shaft* into this rich mine of incident and sentiment ? ’ True ; the reason has been, and is yet, I hope, to be found in the *honour* of our profession, and the determination of its members to *merit* the confidence of their patients, by continuing, in the language of Junius, ‘ the sole depositary of their secrets, which shall perish with them.’ If the writer of the papers in question, or the Editor of Blackwood, should see this letter, they are *implored* to consider its purport ; and thus prevent the public from viewing their medical attendants with *distrust*, and withholding those confidential disclosures which are essential to the due performance of our professional duties. The very persons who would read such a series of articles as the ‘ Passages from the Diary of a late Physician ’ promise to be, with intense interest, would be the first to act on the principle I have mentioned.”

If I were not creditably assured, Sir Christopher, that this letter is the production of a distinguished member of the profession, I should have felt inclined to compress my commentary on it into one emphatic little word,—*humbug* ! As it is, however, I beg to ask the writer, who is so ready at starting the grave charge of a breach of professional confidence, what I do more, in publishing in your Magazine these papers of my late friend, with the most scrupulous concealment of every

thing which could possibly lead to undue disclosures, than is constantly done in the pages of the *Lancet* itself, as well as all the other professional journals, text-books, and treatises, which almost invariably append *real initials*—(I appeal to every medical man whether such is not the fact)—and other *indicia*, to the most painful, and, in many instances, revolting and offensive details? It may possibly be answered—as it really has been—that, in the latter case, the narratives meet only *professional eyes*. What! in the *Lancet*? in the *Medical Gazette*? in *Dr Reece's Journal*? Are these works to be found in the hands of professional men only?—I have but one other observation to make. Would the delicacy of patients be less shocked at finding the peculiar features of their physical maladies—a subject on which their feelings are morbidly irritable—exposed to every member, high and low, young and old, of our extensive profession—the theme of lecturers—the subject of constant allusion and comment, from beneath the thin veil of “Mrs J—— M——t,” &c.; is this, I say, less likely to hurt their feelings, than seeing (as is improbable in nine cases out of ten of those who read these *Passages*) the *morale*, the *sentiment* of their case extracted, dressed in the shape of simple narrative, and challenging the sympathy and admiration of the public? Take, as an instance, the first narrative, entitled “*Cancer*,” which appeared in your last Magazine. Could Mrs St——, were she living, be pained at reading it—or any surviving friend or relative, for her? And if any subsequent sketch should disclose matter of reprobation, in the shape of weak, criminal, or infamous conduct, surely the exposure is merited; such subjects should suffer in silence, and none will

be the wiser for it. I conceive, that several scenes of this character, which I have trembled and blushed over in my late friend's journal, are properly dealt with, if made public property—a source of instruction and warning to all. In a word, I cannot help thinking, that the writer of the letter in question has wasted much fervent zeal to little purpose, and conjured up a ghost for the mere purpose of exorcisation. This I have done for him; and I hope his fears will henceforth abate.

A moment farther, good Sir Christopher. As to one or two individuals who have been singled out by the various knowing papers of the day, as the writer or subject of these chapters, you and I know well that the proper party has never yet been glanced at, nor is likely to be; and for the future, no notice whatever will be taken of their curious speculations. Believe me ever, revered Sir Christopher, &c.

LONDON, *September 9. 1830.*

WHEN I have seen a beautiful and popular actress, I have often thought, How many young play-goers these women must intoxicate—how many even sensible, and otherwise sober heads, they must turn upside down! Some years ago, a case came under my care, which showed fully the justness of this reflection; and I now relate it, as I consider it pregnant both with interest and instruction. It will show how the energies of even a powerful and well-informed mind, may be prostrated by the indulgence of unbridled passions.

Late one evening in November, I was summoned in

haste to visit a gentleman who was staying at one of the hotels in Covent Garden, and informed in a note that he had manifested symptoms of insanity. As there is no time to be lost in such cases, I hurried to the —— Hotel, which I reached about nine o'clock. The proprietor gave me some preliminary information about the patient to whom I was summoned, which, with what I subsequently gleaned from the party himself, and other quarters, I shall present connectedly to the reader, before introducing him to the sick man's chamber.

Mr Warningham—for that name may serve to indicate him through this narrative—was a young man of considerable fortune, some family, and a member of —— College, Cambridge. His person and manners were gentlemanly ; and his countenance, without possessing any claims to the character of handsome, faithfully indicated a powerful and cultivated mind. He had mingled largely in College gaieties and dissipations, but knew little or nothing of what is called “ town life ;” which may, in a great measure, account for much of the simplicity and extravagance of the conduct I am about to relate. Having from his youth upwards been accustomed to the instant gratification of almost every wish he could form, the slightest obstacle in his way was sufficient to irritate him almost to frenzy. His temperament was very ardent—his imagination lively and active. In short, he passed every where for what he really was—a very clever man—extensively read in elegant literature, and particularly intimate with the dramatic writers. About a fortnight before the day on which I was summoned to him, he had come up from College to visit a young lady whom he was addressing ; but finding her unexpectedly gone to Paris,

he resolved to continue in London the whole time he had proposed to himself, and enjoy all the amusements about town—particularly the theatres. The evening of the day on which he arrived at the —— Hotel, beheld him at Drury Lane, witnessing a new, and, as the event proved, a very popular tragedy. In the afterpiece, Miss —— was a prominent performer ; and her beauty of person—her “ maddening eyes,” as Mr Warringham often called them—added to her fascinating *naïveté* of manner, and the interesting character she sustained that evening—at once laid prostrate poor Mr Warringham among the throng of worshippers at the feet of this “ Diana of the Ephesians.”

As he found she played again the next evening, he took care to engage the stage-box ; and fancied he had succeeded in attracting her attention. He thought her lustrous eyes fell on him several times during the evening, and that they were instantly withdrawn, with an air of conscious confusion and embarrassment, from the intense and passionate gaze which they encountered. This was sufficient to fire the train of Mr Warringham’s susceptible feelings ; and his whole heart was in a blaze instantly. Miss —— sang that evening one of her favourite songs—an exquisitely pensive and beautiful air ; and Mr Warringham, almost frantic with excitement, applauded with such obstreperous vehemence, and continued shouting “ *encore—encore* ”—so long after the general calls of the house had ceased, as to attract all eyes for an instant to his box. Miss —— could not, of course, fail to observe his conduct ; and presently herself looked up with what *he* considered a gratified air. Quivering with excitement and nervous irritability, Mr Warringham could scarcely

sit out the rest of the piece ; and the moment the curtain fell, he hurried round to the stage-door, determined to wait and see her leave, for the purpose, if possible, of speaking to her. He presently saw her approach the door, closely muffled, veiled, and bonneted, leaning on the arm of a man of military appearance, who handed her into a very gay chariot. He perceived at once that it was the well known Captain ——. Will it be believed, that this enthusiastic young man actually jumped up behind the carriage which contained the object of his idolatrous homage, and did not alight till it drew up opposite a large house in the western suburbs : and that this absurd feat, moreover, was performed amid an incessant shower of small searching rain ?

He was informed by the footman, whom he had bribed with five shillings, that Miss ——'s own house was in another part of the town, and that her stay at Captain ——'s was only for a day or two. He returned to his hotel in a state of tumultuous excitement, which can be better conceived than described. As may be supposed, he slept little that night ; and the first thing he did in the morning was to despatch his groom, with orders to establish himself in some public-house which could command a view of Miss ——'s residence, and return to Covent-Garden as soon as he had seen her or her maid enter. It was not till seven o'clock that he brought word to his master, that no one had entered but Miss —— maid. The papers informed him that Miss —— played again that evening ; and though he could not but be aware of the sort of intimacy which subsisted between Miss —— and the Captain, his enthusiastic passion only increased with increasing obstacles. Though seriously

unwell with a determination of blood to the head, induced by the perpetual excitement of his feelings, and a severe cold caught through exposure to the rain on the preceding evening—he was dressing for the play, when, to his infinite mortification, his friendly medical attendant happening to step in, positively forbade his leaving his room, and consigned him to bed and physic, instead of the mad-deningscenes of the theatre. The next morning he felt relieved from the more urgent symptoms ; and his servant having brought him word that he had at last watched Miss —— enter her house, unaccompanied, except by her maid, Mr Warringham despatched him with a copy of passionate verses, enclosed in a blank envelope. He trusted that some adroit allusions in them, might possibly give her a clew to the discovery of the writer—especially if he could contrive to be seen by her that evening in the same box he had occupied formerly ; for to the play he was resolved to go, in defiance of the threats of his medical attendant. To his vexation, he found the box in question pre-engaged for a family party ; and—will it be credited ?—he actually entertained the idea of discovering who they were, for the purpose of prevailing on them to vacate in his favour ! Finding that, however, of course, out of the question, he was compelled to content himself with the corresponding box opposite, where he was duly ensconced the moment the doors were opened.

Miss —— appeared that evening in only one piece, but in the course of it she had to sing some of her most admired songs. The character she played, also, was a favourite both with herself and the public. Her dress was exquisitely tasteful and picturesque, and calculated

to set off her figure to the utmost advantage. When, at a particular crisis of the play, Mr Warningham, by the softened lustre of the lowered foot-lights, beheld Miss —— emerging from a romantic glen, with a cloak thrown over her shoulders, her head covered with a velvet cap, over which drooped, in snowy pendency, an ostrich feather, while her hair strayed from beneath the cincture of her cap in loose negligent curls, down her face and beautiful cheeks ; when he saw the timid and alarmed air which her part required her to assume, and the sweet and sad expressions of her eyes, while she stole about, as if avoiding a pursuer ; when, at length, as the raised foot-lights were restored to their former glare, she let fall the cloak which had enveloped her, and, like a metamorphosed chrysalis, burst in beauty on the applauding house, habited in a costume, which without being positively indelicate, was calculated to excite the most voluptuous thoughts ; when, I say, poor Mr Warningham saw all this, he was almost overpowered, and leaned back in his box, breathless with agitation.

A little before Miss —— quitted the stage for the last time that evening, the order of the play required that she should stand for some minutes on that part of the stage next to Mr Warningham's box. While she was standing in a pensive attitude, with her face turned full towards Mr Warningham, he whispered, in a quivering and under tone, " Oh, beautiful, beautiful creature !" Miss —— heard him, looked at him with a little surprise ; her features relaxed into a smile, and, with a gentle shake of the head, as if hinting that he should not endeavour to distract her attention, she moved away to proceed with her part. Mr Warningham trembled violently ; he fan-

ciated she encouraged his attentions, and,—Heaven knows how,—had recognised in him the writer of the verses she had received. When the play was over, he hurried, as on a former occasion, to the stage-door, where he mingled with the inquisitive little throng usually to be found there, and waited till she made her appearance, enveloped, as before, in a large shawl, but followed only by a maid-servant, carrying a bandbox. They stepped into a hackney-coach, and, though Mr Warningham had gone there for the express purpose of speaking to her, his knees knocked together, and he felt so sick with agitation, that he did not even attempt to hand her into the coach. He jumped into the one which drew up next, and ordered the coachman to follow the preceding one wherever it went. When it approached the street where he knew she resided, he ordered it to stop, got out, and hurried on foot towards the house, which he reached just as she was alighting. He offered her his arm. She looked at him with astonishment, and something like apprehension. At length, she appeared to recognise in him the person who had attracted her attention, by whispering when at the theatre, and seemed, he thought, a little discomposed. She declined his proffered assistance—said her maid was with her—and was going to knock at the door, when Mr Warningham stammered faintly, “Dear madam, do allow me the honour of calling in the morning, and inquiring how you are, after the great exertions at the theatre this evening!” She replied in a cold and discouraging manner: could not conceive to what she was indebted for the honour of his particular attentions, and interest in her welfare, so suddenly felt by an utter stranger—unusual—singular—improper—

unpleasant, &c. She said, that, as for his calling in the morning, if he felt so inclined, she, of course, could not prevent him ; but if he expected to see her when he called, he would find himself “ perfectly mistaken.” The door that moment was opened, and closed upon her, as she made him a cold bow, leaving Mr Warringham, what with chagrin and excessive passion for her, almost distracted. He seriously assured me, that he walked to and fro before her door till nearly six o’clock in the morning ; that he repeatedly ascended the steps, and endeavoured, as nearly as he could recollect, to stand on *the very spot* she had occupied while speaking to him, and would remain gazing at what he fancied was the window of her bed-room, for ten minutes together ; and all this extravagance, to boot, was perpetrated amidst an incessant fall of snow, and at a time—Heaven save the mark !—when he was an accepted suitor of Miss ——, the young lady whom he had come to town for the express purpose of visiting ! I several times asked him how it was that he could bring himself to consider such conduct consistent with honour or delicacy, or feel a spark of real attachment for the lady to whom he was engaged, if it were not sufficient to steel his heart and close his eyes against the charms of any other woman in the world ? His only reply was, that he “ really could not help it,”—he felt “ rather the patient, than agent.” Miss —— took his heart, he said, by storm, and forcibly ejected, for a while, his love for any other woman breathing !

To return, however : About half-past six, he jumped into a hackney coach which happened to be passing through the street, drove home to the hotel in Covent Garden, and threw himself on the bed, in a state of ut-

ter exhaustion, both of mind and body. He slept on heavily till twelve o'clock at noon, when he awoke seriously indisposed. For the first few moments, he could not dispossess himself of the idea that Miss —— was standing by his bedside, in the dress she wore the preceding evening, and smiled encouragingly on him. So strong was the delusion, that he actually addressed several sentences to her ! About three o'clock, he drove out, and called on one of his gay friends, who was perfectly *au fait* at matters of this sort, and resolved to make him his confidant in the affair. Under the advice of this Mentor, Mr Warningham purchased a very beautiful emerald ring, which he sent off instantly to Miss ——, with a polite note, saying it was some slight acknowledgment of the delight with which he witnessed her exquisite acting, &c. &c. &c. This, his friend assured him, *must* call forth an answer of some sort or other, which would lead to another—and another—and another—and so on. He was right. A twopenny post letter was put into Mr Warningham's hands the next morning before he rose, which was from Miss ——, elegantly written, and thanked him for the “tasteful present” he had sent her, which she should, with great pleasure, take an early opportunity of gratifying him by wearing in public.

There never yet lived an actress, I verily believe, who had fortitude enough to refuse a present of jewellery !

What was to be done next ? He did not exactly know. But having succeeded at last in opening an avenue of communication with her, and induced her so easily to lie under an obligation to him, he felt convinced that his way was now clear. He determined, there-

fore, to call and see her that very afternoon ; but his medical friend, seeing the state of feverish excitement in which he continued, absolutely interdicted him from leaving the house. The next day he felt considerably better, but was not allowed to leave the house. He could, therefore, find no other means of consoling himself, than writing a note to Miss ——, saying he had “something important” to communicate to her, and begging to know when she would permit him to wait upon her for that purpose. What does the reader imagine this pretext of “something important” was ? To ask her to sit for her portrait to a young artist ! His stratagem succeeded ; for he received, in the course of the next day, a polite invitation to breakfast with Miss —— on the next Sunday morning ; with a hint that he might expect no other company, and that Miss —— was “curious” to know what his particular business with her was. Poor Mr Warningham ! How was he to exist in the interval between this day and Sunday ? He would fain have annihilated it !

Sunday morning at last arrived ; and about nine o'clock he sallied from his hotel, the first time he had left it for several days, and drove to the house. With a fluttering heart he knocked at the door, and a maid-servant ushered him into an elegant apartment, in which breakfast was laid. An elderly lady, some female relative of the actress, was reading a newspaper at the breakfast table ; and Miss —— herself was seated at the piano practising one of those exquisite songs which had been listened to with breathless rapture by thousands. She wore an elegant morning dress ; and though her infatuated visitor had come prepared to see her to

great disadvantage, divested of the dazzling complexion she exhibited on the stage, her pale, and somewhat sallow, features, which wore a pensive and fatigued expression, served to rivet the chains of his admiration still stronger, with the feelings of sympathy. Her beautiful eyes beamed on him with sweetness and affability; and there was an ease, a gentleness in her manners, and a soft animating tone in her voice, which filled Mr Warrington with emotions of indescribable tenderness. A few moments beheld them seated at the breakfast table; and when Mr Warrington gazed at his fair hostess, and reflected on his envied contiguity to one whose beauty and talents were the theme of universal admiration—listened to her lively and varied conversation, and perceived a faint crimson steal for an instant over her countenance, when he reminded her of his exclamation at the theatre—he felt a swelling excitement which would barely suffer him to preserve an exterior calmness of demeanour. He felt, as he expressed it—(for he has often recounted these scenes to me)—that she was *maddening* him! Of course, he exerted himself in conversation to the utmost; and his observations on almost every topic of polite literature were met with equal spirit and sprightliness by Miss ——. He found her fully capable of appreciating the noblest passages from Shakspeare, and some of the older English dramatists, and that was sufficient to lay enthusiastic Mr Warrington at the feet of any woman. He was reciting a passionate passage from Romeo and Juliet, to which Miss —— was listening with an apparent air of kindling enthusiasm, when a phaeton dashed up to the door, and an impetuous thundering of the knocker announced the arrival of some aris-

tocratical visitor. The elderly lady, who was sitting with them, started, coloured, and exclaimed—" Good God ! will you receive *the man* this morning ?"

" Oh, it's only Lord ——," exclaimed Miss ——, with an air of indifference, after having examined the equipage through the window-blinds, " and I won't see the man—that's flat. He pester's me to death," she continued, turning to Mr Warningham, with a pretty, peevish air. It had its effect on him. What an enviable fellow I am, to be received when *Lords* are refused ! thought Mr Warningham.

" Not at home !" drawled Miss ——, coldly, as the servant brought in Lord ——'s card. " You know one can't see *every* body, Mr Warningham," she said, with a smile. " Oh Mr Warningham !—lud, lud !—don't go to the window till the man's gone !" she exclaimed : and her small white hand, with his emerald ring glistening on her second finger, was hurriedly laid on his shoulder, to prevent his going to the window. Mr Warningham declared to me, he could that moment have settled his whole fortune on her !

After the breakfast things were removed, she sat down, at his request, to the piano—a very magnificent present from the Duke of ——, Mrs —— assured him—and sang and played whatever he asked. She played a certain well-known arch air, with the most bewitching simplicity ; Mr Warningham could only *look* his feelings. As she concluded it, and was dashing off the symphony in a careless, but rapid and brilliant style, Mrs ——, the lady once or twice before mentioned, left the room ; and Mr Warningham, scarce knowing what he did, suddenly sank on one knee, from the chair on which

he was sitting by Miss —, grasped her hand, and uttered some exclamation of passionate fondness. Miss — turned to him a moment, with a surprised air, her large, liquid, blue eyes almost entirely hid beneath her half-closed lids, her features relaxed into a coquettish smile, she disengaged her hand, and went on playing and singing,—

“ He sighs—‘ Beauty ! I adore thee,
See me fainting thus before thee ;’
But I say—
Fal, la!, la!, la ! Fal, la!, la!, la !
Fal, la!,” &c.

“ Fascinating, angelic woman !—glorious creature of intellect and beauty, I cannot live but in your presence!” gasped Mr Warningham.

“ Oh ! Lord, what an actor you would have made, Mr Warningham—indeed you would ! Only think how it would sound—‘ *Romeo, Mr Warningham !*’—Lud, lud !—the man would almost persuade me that he was in earnest !” replied Miss —, with the most enchanting air, and ceased playing. Mr Warningham continued addressing her in the most extravagant manner ; indeed, he afterwards told me, he felt “ as though his wits were slipping from him every instant.”

“ Why don’t you go on the stage, Mr Warningham ?” inquired Miss —, with a more earnest and serious air than she had hitherto manifested, and gazing at him with an eye which expressed real admiration,—for she was touched by the winning, persuasive, and passionate eloquence with which Mr Warningham expressed himself. She had hardly uttered the words, when a loud

and long knock was heard at the street door. Miss —— suddenly started from the piano ; turned pale, and exclaimed in a hurried and agitated tone.—“ Lord, Lord, what’s to be done ?—Captain —— !—what ever can have brought him up to town—oh ! my ——.”

“ Good God ! madam, what can possibly alarm you in this manner ?” exclaimed Mr Warningham, with a surprised air. “ What in the earth can there be in this Captain —— to startle you in this manner ? What can the man want here if his presence is disagreeable to you ? Pray, madam, give him the same answer you gave Lord —— !” —“ Oh, Mr Warn—dear, dear ! the door is opened—what *will* become of me if Captain —— sees you here ? Ah ! I have it, you must—country manager—provincial enga—” hurriedly muttered Miss ——, as the room-door opened, and a gentleman of a lofty and military bearing, dressed in a blue surtout and white trowsers, with a slight walking cane in his hand, entered, and without observing Mr Warningham, who at the moment happened to be standing rather behind the door, hurried towards Miss ——, exclaiming with a gay and fond air, “ Ha, my charming De Medici, how d’ye do ?—Why, who have we *here* ?” he inquired, suddenly breaking off, and turning with an astonished air towards Mr Warningham.

“ What possible business can *this person* have here, Miss —— ?” inquired the Captain with a cold and angry air, letting fall her hand, which he had grasped on entering, and eyeing Mr Warningham with a furious scowl. Miss —— muttered something indistinctly about business—a provincial engagement—and looked appealingly towards Mr Warningham, as if beseeching him to

take the cue, and assume the character of a country manager. Mr Warningham, however, was not experienced enough in matters of this kind to take the hint.

"My good sir—I beg pardon, *Captain*"—said he, buttoning his coat, and speaking in a voice almost choked with fury—"what is the meaning of all this? What do you mean, sir, by this insolent bearing towards me?"

"Good God! Do you know, sir, whom you are speaking to?" inquired the Captain, with an air of wonder.

"I care as little as I know, sir; but *this* I know—I shall give you to understand, that, whoever you are, I won't be *bullied* by you."

"The devil!" exclaimed the Captain, slowly, as if he hardly comprehended what was passing. Miss —, pale as a statue, and trembling from head to foot, leaned speechless against the corner of the piano, apparently stupified by the scene that was passing.

"Oh, by —! this will never do," at length exclaimed the Captain, as he rushed up to Mr Warningham, and struck him furiously over the shoulders with his cane. He was going to seize Mr Warningham's collar with his left hand, as if for the purpose of inflicting further chastisement, when Mr Warningham, who was a very muscular man, shook him off, and dashed his right hand full into the face of the Captain. Miss — shrieked for assistance—while the Captain put himself instantly into attitude, and, being a first-rate "miller," as the phrase is, before Mr Warningham could prepare himself for the encounter, let fall a sudden shower of blows about Mr Warningham's head and breast, that fell on him like the strokes of a sledge-hammer. He was, of course, in-

stantly laid prostrate on the floor in a state of insensibility, and recollected nothing farther till he found himself lying in his bed at the —— Hotel, about the middle of the night, faint and weak with the loss of blood, his head bandaged, and amid all the *desagrémens* and attendance of a sick man's chamber. How or when he had been conveyed to the hotel he knew not, till he was informed, some weeks afterwards, that Captain ——, having learned his residence from Miss ——, had brought him in his carriage, in a state of stupor. All the circumstances above related combined to throw Mr Warningham into a fever, which increased upon him; the state of nervous excitement in which he had lived for the last few days, aggravated the other symptoms—and delirium at last deepened into downright madness. The medical man, who has been several times before mentioned, as a friendly attendant of Mr Warningham, finding that matters grew so serious, and being unwilling any longer to bear the sole responsibility of the case, advised Mr Warningham's friends, who had been summoned from a distant county to his bedside, to call me in; and this was the *statu quo* of affairs when I paid my first visit.

On entering the room, I found a keeper sitting on each side of the bed on which lay Mr Warningham, who was raving fearfully, gnashing his teeth, and imprecating the most frightful curses upon Captain —— . It was with the utmost difficulty that the keepers could hold him down, even though my unfortunate patient was suffering under the restraint of a strait waistcoat. His countenance, which I think I mentioned was naturally

very expressive, if not handsome, exhibited the most ghastly contortions. His eyes glared into every corner of the room, and seemed about to start from their sockets.—After standing for some moments a silent spectator of this painful scene, endeavouring to watch the current of his malady, and, at the same time, soothe the affliction of his uncle, who was standing by my side, dreadfully agitated, I ventured to approach nearer, observing him almost exhausted, and relapsing into silence—undisturbed but by heavy and stertorous breathing. He lay with his face buried in the pillow ; and, on my putting my fingers to his temples, he suddenly turned his face towards me. “ God bless me—Mr Kean !” said he, in an altered tone—“ this is really a very unexpected honour !” He seemed embarrassed at seeing me. I determined to humour his fancy—the only rational method of dealing with such patients. I may as well say, in passing, that some persons have not unfrequently found a resemblance—faint and slight, if any at all—between my features and those of the celebrated tragedian for whom I was on the present occasion mistaken.

“ Oh, yours are terrible eyes, Mr Kean—very, very terrible ! Where did you get them ? What fiend touched them with such unnatural lustre ? They are not human,—no, no ! What do you think I have often fancied they resembled ?”

“ Really, I can’t pretend to say, sir,” I replied, with some curiosity.

“ Why, one of the damned inmates of hell—glaring through the fiery bars of his prison,” replied Mr Warringham, with a shudder. “ Is not that a ghastly fancy ?” he inquired.

" 'Tis horrible enough, indeed," said I, determined to humour him.

" Ha, ha, ha !—Ha, ha, ha !" roared the wretched maniac, with a laugh which made us all quake round his bedside. " I can say better things than that,—though it is good ! It's nothing like the way in which I shall talk to-morrow morning—ha, ha, ha !—for I am going down to hell, to learn some of the fiend's talk ; and when I come back, I'll give you a lesson, Mr Kean, shall be worth two thousand a-year to you—ha, ha, ha !—What d'ye say to that, Othello ?" He paused, and continued mumbling something to himself, in a strangely different tone of voice from that in which he had just addressed me.

" Mr Kean, Mr Kean," said he, suddenly, " you're the very man I want ; I suppose they had told you I had been asking for you, eh ?"

" Yes, certainly, I heard"——

" Very good—'twas civil of them ; but, now you are here, just shade those basilisk eyes of yours, for they blight my soul within me." I did as he directed. " Now, I'll tell you what I've been thinking,—I've got a tragedy ready, very nearly at least, and there's a magnificent character for you in it—expressly written for you—a compound of Richard, Shylock, and Sir Giles—your masterpiece—a sort of *quartum quiddam*—eh—you hear me, Mr Kean ?"

" Ay, and mark thee, too, Hal," I replied, thinking a quotation from his favourite Shakspeare would soothe and flatter his inflamed fancy.

" Ah—aptly quoted—happy, happy !—By the way, talking of that, I don't at all admire your personation of Hamlet—I don't, Mr Kean, I *don't*. 'Tis utterly mis-

conceived—wrong from beginning to end ; it is really. You see what an independent, straight-forward critic I am—ha, ha, ha!”--accompanying the words with a laugh, if not as loud, as fearful as his former ones. I told him, I bowed to his judgment.

“ Good,” he answered ; “ genius should always be candid. Macready has a single whisper, when he inquires, ‘ *Is it the King?* ’ which is worth all *your* fiendish mutterings and gaspings, ha, ha ! ‘ Does the galled jade wince ? Her withers are unwrung.’—Mr Kean, how absurd you are, ill-mannered—pardon me for saying it—for interrupting me,” he said, after a pause ; adding, with a puzzled air, “ *What* was it I was talking about when you interrupted me ?”

“ Do you mean the tragedy ?”——(I had not opened my lips to interrupt him.)

“ Ha—the tragedy.

The play, the play’s the thing,

Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the king.

Ah—the *tragedy* was it I was mentioning ? *Rem acu—acu tetigisti*—that’s Latin, Mr Kean ! Did you ever learn Latin and Greek, eh ?”—I told him I had studied them a little.

“ What *can* you mean by interrupting me thus unmannerly ?—Mr Kean, I won’t stand it. Once more—*what* was it I was talking about a few minutes ago ?” He had again let slip the thread of his thoughts. “ A digression this, Mr Kean ; I must be mad—*indeed* I must !” he continued, with a shudder, and a look of sudden sanity, “ I must be mad, and I can’t help thinking what a profound knowledge of human nature Shak-

speare shows when he makes *memory* the test of sanity—a vast depth of philosophy in it,—eh? D’ye recollect the passage,—eh, Kean?” I said I certainly could not call it to mind.

“Then it’s infamous!—a shame and disgrace to you. It’s quite true what people say of you—you are a mere tragedy hack! Why won’t you try to get out of that mill-horse round of your hackneyed characters? Excuse me; you know I’m a vast admirer of yours, but an *honest* one!—Curse me,” after a sudden pause, adding with a bewildered and angry air, “*what* was it I was going to say?—I’ve lost it again!—oh, a passage from Shakspeare—memory—test of——Ah, *now* we have him! ’Tis this: mark and remember it!—’tis in King Lear—

——Bring me to the test,
And I *the matter will re-word*, which *madness*
Would gamble from.

Profoundly true— isn’t it, Kean?”—Of course I acquiesced.

“Ah,” he resumed, with a pleased smile, “nobody now can write like that except myself—Go it, Harry—ha, ha, ha!—Who—oo—o!” uttering the strangest kind of revolting cry I ever heard. “Oh, dear, dear, me, *what* was it I was saying? The thought keeps slipping from me like a lithe eel; I can’t hold it. Eels, by the way, are nothing but a sort of water snake—’tis brutal to eat them! What made me name eels, Mr Kean?” I reminded him. “Ah, there *must* be a screw loose—something wrong *here*,” shaking his head; “it’s all upside down—ha! *what* was it now?” I once more recalled it to his mind, for I saw he was fretting himself with

vexation at being unable to take up the chain of his thoughts.

“ Ah !— well now, once more—I said I’d a character for you—good ; do it justice— or, by my life, I’ll hiss you like a huge boa, coiled in the middle of the pit ! There’s a thought for you, by the way !—Stay—I’m losing the thought again—hold it—hold it”——

“ The tragedy, sir,”——

“ Ah, to be sure—I’ve another character for Miss—— (naming the actress before mentioned)—magnificent queen of beauty—nightingale of song—radiant—peerless—Ah, lady, look on me !—look on me !” and he suddenly burst into one of the most tiger-like howls I could conceive capable of being uttered by a human being. It must have been heard in the street and market without. We who were round him stood listening, chilled with horror. When he had ceased, I said, in a soothing whisper, “ Compose yourself, Mr Warningham—you’ll see her by and by.” He looked me full in the face, and uttered as shocking a yell as before.

“ Avaunt !—out on ye ! scoundrels !—fiends !” he shouted, struggling with the men who were endeavouring to hold him down—“ Are you come to murder me ?—Ha—a—a— !” and he fell back as though he was in the act of being choked or throttled.

“ Where—where is the fiend who struck me ?”—he groaned in a fierce under-tone ; “ and in HER presence, too ; and she stood by looking on !—cruel, beautiful, deceitful woman ! Did she turn pale and tremble ? Will not I have his blood—blood—blood !” and he clutched his fists with a savage and murderous force. “ Ah ! you around me, say, does not blood cleanse the deepest,

foulest stain,—or hide it? Pour it on, warm and reeking—a crimson flood—and never trust me if it does not wash out insult for ever! Ha—ha—ha! Oh, let me loose! Let me loose! Let me but cast my eyes on the insolent ruffian—the brutal bully—let me but lay hands on him!” and he drew in his breath with a long, fierce, and deep respiration. “Will I not shake him out of his military trappings and fooleries? Ha, devils! unhand me—I say, unhand me, and let me loose on this Captain ——!”

In this strain the unhappy young man continued raving for about ten minutes longer, till he utterly exhausted himself. The paroxysm was over for the present. The keepers, aware of this—for, of course, they were accustomed to such fearful scenes as these, and preserved the most cool and matter-of-fact demeanour conceivable—relaxed their hold. Mr Warningham lay perfectly motionless, with his eyes closed, breathing slow and heavily, while the perspiration burst from every pore. His pulse and other symptoms showed me that a few more similar paroxysms would destroy him; and that, consequently, the most active remedies must be had recourse to immediately. I therefore directed what was to be done—his head to be shaved—that he should be bled copiously—kept perfectly cool and tranquil—and prescribed such medicines as I conceived most calculated to effect this object. On my way down stairs, I encountered Mr ——, the proprietor, or landlord, of the hotel, who, with a very agitated air, told me, he must insist on having Mr Warningham removed immediately from the hotel; for that his ravings disturbed and agitated every body in the place, and had been loudly complained of.

Seeing the reasonableness of this, my patient was, with my sanction, conveyed, that evening, to airy and genteel lodgings in one of the adjoining streets. The three or four following visits I paid him, presented scenes little varying from the one I have above been attempting to describe. They gradually, however, abated in violence.

I shall not be guilty of extravagance or exaggeration, if I protest, that there was sometimes a vein of sublimity in his ravings. He really said some of the very finest things I ever heard. This need not occasion wonder, if it be recollected, that "out of the fulness of the heart, the mouth speaketh;" and Mr Warningham's naturally powerful mind was filled with accumulated stores, acquired from almost every region of literature. His fancy was deeply tinged with Germanism—with *diablerie*—and some of his ghostly images used to haunt and creep after me, like spirits, gibbering and chattering the expressions with which the maniac had conjured them into being.

To me, nothing is so affecting—so terrible—so humiliating, as to see a powerful intellect, like that of Mr Warningham, the prey of insanity, exhibiting glimpses of greatness and beauty, amid all the chaotic gloom and havoc of madness; reminding * one of the mighty fragments of some dilapidated structure of Greece or Rome, mouldering apart from one another, still displaying the exquisite moulding and chiselling of the artist, and enhancing the beholder's regret that so glorious a fabric

* Two newspapers have charged the writer with borrowing this image from Dr HALLAM's *Treatise on Insanity*. If that author *has* a similar thought, the coincidence is purely accidental; for I *never saw his book* in my life.

should have been destroyed by the ruthless hand of time. Insanity, indeed, makes the most fearful inroads on an intellect distinguished by its *activity*; and the flame is fed rapidly by the fuel afforded from an excitable and vigorous fancy. A tremendous responsibility is incurred, in such cases, by the medical attendants. Long experience has convinced me, that the only successful way of dealing with such patients as Mr Warringham, is, chiming in readily with their various fancies, without seeming in the slightest degree shocked or alarmed by the most monstrous extravagancies. The patient must never be startled by any appearance of surprise or apprehension from those around him—never irritated by contradiction, or indications of impatience. Should this be done by some inexperienced attendant, the mischief may prove irremediable by any subsequent treatment; the flame will blaze out with a fury which will consume instantly every vestige of intellectual structure, leaving the body—the shell—the bare, blackened walls alone,

A scoff, a jest, a by-word through the world.

Let the patient have sea-room; allow him to dash about for a while in the tempest and whirlwind of his disordered faculties; while all that is necessary from those around, is to watch the critical moment, and pour the oil of soothing acquiescence on the foaming waters. Depend upon it, the uproar will subside when the winds of opposition cease.—To return, however, to Mr Warringham. The incubus which had brooded over his intellects for more than a week, at length disappeared, leaving its victim trembling on the very verge of the grave. In truth, I do not recollect ever seeing a pa-

tient whose energies, both physical and mental, were so dreadfully shattered. He had lost almost all muscular power. He could not raise his hand to his head, alter his position in the bed, or even masticate his food. For several days it could barely be said that he existed. He could utter nothing more than an almost inaudible whisper, and seemed utterly unconscious of what was passing around him. His sister, a young and very interesting woman, had flown to his bedside immediately the family were acquainted with his illness, and had continued ever since in daily and nightly attendance on him, till she herself seemed almost worn out. How I loved her for her pallid, exhausted, anxious, yet affectionate looks! Had not this illness intervened, she would have been before this time married to a rising young man at the Bar; yet her devoted sisterly sympathies attached her to her brother's bedside without repining, and she would never think of leaving him. Her feelings may be conceived, when it is known that she was in a great measure acquainted with the cause of her brother's sudden illness; and it was her painful duty to sit and listen to many unconscious disclosures of the most afflicting nature. This latter circumstance furnished the first source of uneasiness to Mr Warringham, on recovering the exercise of his rational faculties. He was excessively agitated at the idea of his having alluded to, and described the dissipated and profligate scenes of his college life; and when he had once compelled me to acknowledge, that his sister and other relations were apprized of the events which led to his illness, he sank into moody silence for some time, evidently scourging himself with

the heaviest self-reproaches, and presently exclaimed,—
“ Well, Doctor, thus you see, has

———— Even-handed justice
Compell'd the poison'd chalice to my lips,

and I have drunk the foul draught to the dregs. Yet though I would at this moment lay down half my fortune to blot from their memories what they must have heard me utter, I shall submit in silence—I have richly earned it!—I now, however, bid farewell to debauchery—profligacy—dissipation, for ever.”—I interrupted him by saying, I was not aware, nor were his relatives, that he had been publicly distinguished as a debauchee. “ Why, doctor,” he replied, “ possibly not—there may be others who have exposed themselves more absurdly than I have—who have drunk and raked more—but mine has been the viler profligacy of the *heart*—the dissipation of the *feelings*. But it shall cease! God knows I never thoroughly enjoyed it, though it has occasioned me a delirious sort of excitement, which has at length nearly destroyed me. I have clambered out of the scorching crater of Etna, scathed, but not consumed. I will now descend into the tranquil vales of virtue, and never, never leave them!” He wept—for he had not yet recovered the tone or mastery of his feelings. These salutary thoughts led to a permanent reformation; his illness, in short, had produced its effect. One other thing there was which yet occasioned him disquietude and uncertainty; he said he felt bound to seek the usual “ satisfaction” from Captain ———! I and all around him, to whom he hinted it, scouted the idea; and he himself relinquished it on hearing that Captain ——— had called

often during his illness, and left many cards, with the most anxious inquiries after his health ; and in a day or two had a private interview with Mr Warningham, when he apologized in the most prompt and handsome manner for his violent conduct, and expressed the liveliest regrets at the serious consequences with which it had been attended.

Mr Warningham, to conclude, recovered but slowly ; and as soon as his weakness would admit of the journey, removed to the family house in —— shire ; from thence he went to the seaside, and staid there till the close of the autumn, reading philosophy, and some of the leading writers on morals. He was married in October, and set off for the Continent in the spring. His constitution, however, had received a shock from which it never recovered ; and two years after, Mr Warningham died of a decline at Genoa.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BROKEN HEART.

THERE was a large and gay party assembled one evening, in the memorable month of June 1815, at a house in the remote western suburbs of London. Throngs of handsome and well-dressed women—a large retinue of the leading men about town—the dazzling light of chandeliers blazing like three suns overhead—the charms of music and dancing—together with that tone of excitement then pervading society at large, owing to our successful continental campaigns, which maddened England with almost daily annunciations of victory,—all these circumstances, I say, combined to supply spirit to every party. In fact, England was almost turned upside down with universal fêting ! Mrs —, the lady whose party I have just been mentioning, was in ecstasy at the eclat with which the whole was going off, and charmed with the buoyant animation with which all seemed inclined to contribute their quota to the evening's amusement. A young lady of some personal attractions, most amiable manners, and great accomplishments—particularly musical—had been repeatedly solicited to sit down to the piano, for the purpose of favouring the

company with the sweet Scottish air, "The Banks of Allan Water." For a long time, however, she steadfastly resisted their importunities, on the plea of low spirits. There was evidently an air of deep pensiveness, if not melancholy, about her, which ought to have corroborated the truth of the plea she urged. She did not seem to gather excitement with the rest; and rather endured, than shared, the gaieties of the evening. Of course, the young folks around her of her own sex whispered their suspicions that she was in love; and, in point of fact, it was well known by several present, that Miss—— was engaged to a young officer who had earned considerable distinction in the Peninsular campaign, and to whom she was to be united on his return from the Continent. It need not therefore be wondered at, that a thought of the various casualties to which a soldier's life is exposed—especially a bold and brave young soldier, such as her intended had proved himself—and the possibility, if not probability, that he might, alas! never,

Return to claim his blushing bride,

but be left behind among the glorious throng of the fallen—sufficed to overcast her mind with gloomy anxieties and apprehensions. It was, indeed, owing solely to the affectionate importunities of her relatives, that she was prevailed on to be seen in society at all. Had her own inclinations been consulted, she would have sought solitude, where she might, with weeping and trembling, commend her hopes to the hands of Him "who seeth in secret," and "in whose hands are the issues" of battle. As, however, Miss ——'s rich contralto voice, and skilful powers of accompaniment, were much talked of, the

company would listen to no excuses or apologies ; so the poor girl was absolutely *baited* into sitting down to the piano, when she ran over a few melancholy chords with an air of reluctance and displacency. Her sympathies were soon excited by the fine tones—the tumultuous melody—of the keys she touched ; and she presently struck into the soft and soothing symphony of “ The Banks of Allan Water.” The breathless silence of the bystanders—for nearly all the company had thronged around—was at length broken by her voice, stealing “ like faint blue gushing streams,” on the delighted ears of her auditors, as she commenced singing that exquisite little ballad, with the most touching pathos and simplicity. She had just commenced the verse,

For his bride a soldier sought her,
And a winning tongue had he !

when, to the surprise of every body around her, she suddenly ceased playing and singing, without removing her hands from the instrument, and gazed steadfastly forward with a vacant air, while the colour faded from her cheeks, and left them pale as the lily. She continued thus for some moments, to the alarm and astonishment of the company—motionless, and apparently unconscious of any one’s presence. Her elder sister, much agitated, stepped towards her, placed her hand on her shoulder, endeavoured gently to rouse her, and said hurriedly, “ Anne, Anne ! what is the matter ?”—Miss —— made no answer ; but a few moments after, without moving her eyes, suddenly burst into a piercing shriek ! Consternation seized all present.

“ Sister—sister !—Dear Anne, are you ill ?” again in-

quired her trembling sister, endeavouring to rouse her, but in vain. Miss —— did not seem either to see or hear her. Her eyes still gazed fixedly forward, till they seemed gradually to expand, as it were, with an expression of glassy horror. All present seemed utterly confounded, and afraid to interfere with her. Whispers were heard, “She’s ill—in a fit—run for some water ! Good God !—How strange !—What a piercing shriek !” —&c. &c. At length Miss ——’s lips moved. She began to mutter inaudibly ; but by and by those immediately near her could distinguish the words, “There !—there they are—with their lanterns.—Oh ! they are looking out for the *de—a—d* !—They turn over the heaps.—Ah !—now—no !—that little hill of slain—see, see !—they are turning them over, one by one—There !—THERE HE IS !—Oh, horror ! horror ! horror !—RIGHT THROUGH THE HEART !” and with a long shuddering groan, she fell senseless into the arms of her horror-struck sister. Of course all were in confusion and dismay—not a face present, but was blanched with agitation and affright on hearing the extraordinary words she uttered. With due delicacy and propriety of feeling, all those whose carriages had happened to have already arrived, instantly took their departure, to prevent their presence embarrassing or interfering with the family, who were already sufficiently bewildered. The room was soon thinned of all, except those who were immediately engaged in rendering their services to the young lady ; and a servant was instantly despatched with a horse, for me. On my arrival, I found her in bed, (still at the house where the party was given, which was that of the young lady’s sister-in-law). She had fallen into a succession of

swoons ever since she had been carried up from the drawing-room, and was perfectly senseless when I entered the bed-chamber where she lay. She had not spoken a syllable since uttering the singular words just related ; and her whole frame was cold and rigid—in fact, she seemed to have received some strange shock, which had altogether paralysed her. By the use, however, of strong stimulants, we succeeded in at length restoring her to something like consciousness, but I think it would have been better for her, judging from the event, never to have woken again from forgetfulness. She opened her eyes under the influence of the searching stimulants we applied, and stared vacantly for an instant on those standing round her bedside. Her countenance, of an ashy hue, was damp with clammy perspiration, and she lay perfectly motionless, except when her frame undulated with long deep-drawn sighs.

“ Oh, wretched, wretched, wretched girl !” she murmured at length, “ why have I lived till now ? Why did you not suffer me to expire ? He called me to join him—I was going—and you will not let me—but I MUST go—yes, yes !”

“ Anne—dearest !—why do you talk so ? Charles is not gone—he will return soon—he will indeed,” sobbed her sister.

“ Oh, never, never ! You could not see what I saw, Jane”—she shuddered—“ Oh, it was frightful ! How they tumbled about the heaps of the dead !—how they stripped—oh, horror, horror !”

“ My dear Miss ——, you are dreaming—raving—indeed you are,” said I, holding her hand in mine, “ Come, come, you must not give way to such gloomy, such ner-

vous fancies—you must not indeed. You are frightening your friends to no purpose.”

“What do you mean?” she replied, looking me suddenly full in the face. “I tell you it is true! Ah me, Charles is dead—I know it—I saw him! *Shot right through the heart!* They were stripping him, when”——, and, heaving three or four short convulsive sobs, she again swooned. Mrs ——, the lady of the house, (the sister-in-law of Miss ——, as I think I have mentioned), could endure the distressing scene no longer, and was carried out of the room, fainting, in the arms of her husband. With great difficulty, we succeeded in restoring Miss —— once more to consciousness; but the frequency and duration of her relapses began seriously to alarm me. The spirit, being brought so often to the brink, might at last suddenly flit off into eternity, without any one’s being aware of it. I, of course, did all that my professional knowledge and experience suggested; and, after expressing my readiness to remain all night in the house, in the event of any sudden alteration in Miss —— for the worse, I took my departure, promising to call very early in the morning. Before leaving, Mr —— had acquainted me with all the particulars above related; and, as I rode home, I could not help feeling the liveliest curiosity, mingled with the most intense sympathy for the unfortunate sufferer, to see whether the corroborating event would stamp the present as one of those extraordinary occurrences, which occasionally “come o’er us like a summer cloud,” astonishing and perplexing every one.

The next morning, about nine o’clock, I was again at Miss ——’s bedside. She was nearly in the same state as that in which I had left her the preceding evening—

only feebler, and almost continually stupified. She seemed, as it were, stunned with some severe, but invisible stroke. She said scarcely any thing, but often uttered a low, moaning, indistinct sound, and whispered at intervals, "Yes—shortly, Charles, shortly—to-morrow." There was no rousing her by conversation; she noticed no one, and would answer no questions. I suggested the propriety of calling in additional medical assistance; and, in the evening, met two eminent brother physicians in consultation at her bedside. We came to the conclusion, that she was sinking rapidly, and that, unless some miracle intervened to restore her energies, she would continue with us but a very little longer. After my brother physicians had left, I returned to the sick-chamber, and sat by Miss ——'s bedside for more than an hour. My feelings were much agitated at witnessing her singular and affecting situation. There was such a sweet and sorrowful expression about her pallid features, deepening, occasionally, into such hopelessness of heart-broken anguish, as no one could contemplate without deep emotion. There was, besides, something mysterious and awing—something of what in Scotland is called *second sight*—in the circumstances which had occasioned her illness.

"Gonc—gone!" she murmured, with closed eyes, while I was sitting and gazing in silence on her, "gone—and in glory! I shall see the young conqueror—I shall! How he will love me! Ah! I recollect," she continued, after a long interval, "it was 'The Banks of Allan Water' those cruel people made me sing—and my heart breaking the while!—What was the verse I was singing when I saw"—she shuddered—"oh!—this,—

For his bride a soldier sought her,
And a winning tongue had he—
On the banks of Allan water
None so gay as she !
But the summer grief had brought her,
And the soldier—false was he—

Oh, no, no, never—Charles—my poor murdered Charles—never !” she groaned ; and spoke no more that night. She continued utterly deaf to all that was said in the way of sympathy or remonstrance ; and, if her lips moved at all, it was only to utter faintly some such words as “ Oh, let me—let me leave in peace !” During the two next days, she continued drooping rapidly. The only circumstance about her demeanour particularly noticed, was, that she once moved her hands for a moment over the counterpane, as though she were playing the piano—a sudden flush overspread her features—her eyes stared, as though she were startled by the appearance of some phantom or other, and she gasped, “ There, there !”—after which she relapsed into her former state of stupor.

Now, will it be credited, that on the fourth morning of Miss ——’s illness, a letter was received from Paris by her family, with a black seal, and franked by the noble Colonel of the regiment in which Charles —— had served, communicating the melancholy intelligence, that the young Captain had fallen towards the close of the battle of Waterloo ; for while in the act of charging at the head of his corps, a French cavalry officer shot him with his pistol *right through the heart* ! The whole family, with all their acquaintance, were unutterably shocked at the news, and almost petrified with amazement at the strange corroboration of Miss ——’s prediction. How

to communicate it to the poor sufferer was now a serious question; or whether to communicate it at all at present? The family, at last, considering that it would be unjustifiable in them any longer to withhold the intelligence, intrusted the painful duty to me. I therefore repaired to her bedside alone, in the evening of the day on which the letter had been received: that evening was the last of her life! I sat down in my usual place beside her, and her pulse, countenance, breathing, cold extremities, together with the fact, that she had taken no nourishment whatever since she had been laid on her bed, convinced me that the poor girl's sufferings were soon to terminate. I was at a loss for a length of time how to break the oppressive silence. Observing, however, her fading eyes fixed on me, I determined, as it were accidentally, to attract them to the fatal letter which I then held in my hand. After a while she observed it; her eye suddenly settled on the ample coroneted seal, and the sight operated something like an electric shock. She seemed struggling to speak, but in vain. I now wished to Heaven I had never agreed to undertake the duty which had been imposed upon me. I opened the letter, and, looking steadfastly at her, said, in as soothing tones as my agitation could command,—“My dear girl—now, don't be alarmed, or I shall not tell you what I was going to tell you.”—She trembled, and her sensibilities seemed suddenly restored; for her eye assumed an expression of alarmed intelligence, and her lips moved about like those of a person who feels them parched with agitation, and endeavours to moisten them. “This letter has been received to-day from Paris,” I continued; “it is from

Colonel —, and brings word that—that—that”—I felt suddenly choked, and could not bring out the words.

“That my Charles is DEAD—I know it. Did I not tell you so?” said Miss —, interrupting me, with as clear and distinct a tone of voice as she ever had in her life. I felt confounded. Had the unexpected operation of the news I brought been able to dissolve the spell which had withered her mental energies, and afford promise of her restoration to health?

Has the reader ever watched a candle, which is flickering and expiring in its socket, suddenly shoot up into an instantaneous brilliance, and then be utterly extinguished? I soon saw it was thus with poor Miss —. All the expiring energies of her soul were suddenly collected to receive this corroboration of her vision—if such it may be called—and then she would,

Like a lily drooping,
Bow her head, and die.

To return: She begged me, in a faltering voice, to read her all the letter. She listened with closed eyes, and made no remark, when I had concluded. After a long pause, I exclaimed—“God be praised, my dear Miss —, that you have been able to receive this dreadful news so firmly!”

“Doctor, tell me, have you no medicine that could make me weep?—Oh, give it me, give it me! It would relieve me, for I feel a mountain on my breast—it is crushing me,” she replied feebly, uttering the words at long intervals. Pressing her hand in mine, I begged her to be calm, and the oppression would soon disappear.

“ Oh—oh—oh, that I could weep, Doctor !” She whispered something else, but inaudibly. I put my ear close to her mouth, and distinguished something like the words—“ Jane !—I am—call her—hush”—accompanied with a faint, fluttering, gurgling sound. Alas, I too well understood it ! With much trepidation I ordered the nurse to summon the family into the room instantly. Her sister Jane was the first that entered, her eyes swollen with weeping, and seemingly half suffocated with the effort to conceal her emotions.

“ Oh, my darling, precious,—my own sister Anne !” she sobbed, and knelt down at the bedside, flinging her arms round her sister’s neck, kissing the gentle sufferer’s cheeks and mouth.

“ Anne !—love !—darling !—don’t you know me ?” She groaned, kissing her forehead repeatedly. Could I help weeping ? All who had entered were standing around the bed, sobbing, and in tears. I kept my fingers at the wrist of the dying sufferer ; but could not feel whether or not the pulse beat, which, however, I attributed to my own agitation.

“ Speak—speak—my darling Anne ! speak to me ; I am your poor sister Jane !” sobbed the agonized girl, continuing fondly kissing her sister’s cold lips and forehead. She suddenly started—exclaimed, “ O God, *she’s dead !*” and sank instantly senseless on the floor. Alas, alas ! it was too true ; my sweet and broken-hearted patient was no more !

CHAPTER IX.

CONSUMPTION.

CONSUMPTION !—Terrible, insatiable tyrant !—Who can arrest thy progress, or number thy victims ? Why dost thou attack almost exclusively the fairest and loveliest of our species ? Why select blooming and beautiful youth, instead of haggard and exhausted age ? Why strike down those who are bounding blithely from the starting-post of life, rather than the decrepit beings tottering towards its goal ? By what infernal subtilty hast thou contrived hitherto to baffle the profoundest skill of science, to frustrate utterly the uses of experience, and disclose thyself only when thou hast irretrievably secured thy victim, and thy fangs are crimsoned with its blood ? Destroying angel ! why art thou commissioned thus to smite down the first-born of agonized humanity ? What are the strange purposes of Providence, that thus letteth thee loose upon the objects of its infinite goodness !

Alas ! how many aching hearts have been agitated with these unanswerable questions, and how many my-

riads are yet to be wrung and tortured by them !—Let me proceed to lay before the reader a short and simple statement of one of the many cases of consumption, and all its attendant broken-heartedness with which a tolerably extensive practice has, alas ! *crowded* my memory. The one immediately following has been selected, because it seemed to me, though destitute of varied and stirring incident, calculated, on various accounts, to excite peculiar interest and sympathy. Possibly there are a few who may consider the ensuing pages pervaded by a tone of exaggeration. Indeed it is not so. My heart has really ached under the task of recording the bitter, premature fate of one of the most lovely and accomplished young women I ever knew ; and the vivid recollection of her sufferings, as well as those of her anguished relatives, may have led me to adopt strong language,—but not strong enough adequately to express my feelings.

Miss Herbert lost both her father and mother before she had attained her tenth year ; and was solemnly committed by each to the care of her uncle, a Baronet, who was unmarried, and, through disappointment in a first attachment, seemed likely to continue so to the end of his life. Two years after his brother's death, he was appointed to an eminent official situation in India, as the fortune attached to his baronetcy had suffered severely from the extravagance of his predecessors. He was for some time at a loss how to dispose of his little niece. Should he take her with him to India, accompanied by a first-rate governess, and have her carefully educated under his own eye ; or leave her behind in England, at one of the fashionable boarding-schools, and

trust to the general *surveillance* of a distant female relative? He decided on the former course; and, accordingly, very shortly after completing her twelfth year, this little blooming exotic was transplanted to the searched soil, and destined to “waste its sweetness” on the sultry air, of India.

A more delicate and lovely little creature than was Eliza Herbert, at this period, cannot be conceived. She was the only bud from a parent stem of remarkable beauty; but, alas! that stem was suddenly withered by consumption. Her father, also, fell a victim to the fierce typhus fever only half a year after the death of his wife. Little Eliza Herbert inherited, with her mother’s beauty, her constitutional delicacy. Her figure was so slight, that it almost suggested to the beholder the idea of transparency; and there was a softness and languor in her azure eyes, beaming through their long silken lashes, which told of something too refined for humanity. Her disposition fully comported with her person and habits,—arch, mild, and intelligent, with a little dash of pensiveness. She loved the shade of retirement. If she occasionally flitted for a moment into the world, its glare and uproar seemed almost to stun her gentle spirit, and fright it back into congenial privacy. She was, almost from infancy, devotedly fond of reading; and sought with peculiar avidity books of sentiment. Her gifted preceptress—one of the most amiable and refined of women—soon won her entire confidence, and found little difficulty in imparting to her apt pupil all the stores of her own superior and extensive accomplishments. Not a day passed over her head, that did not find Eliza Herbert rivetted more firmly in the hearts of all who came

near her, from her doating uncle, down to the most distant domestic. Every luxury that wealth and power could procure, was, of course, always at her command ; but her own innate propriety and just taste prompted her to prefer simplicity in all things. Flattery of all kinds she abhorred—and forsook the house of a rich old English lady, who once told her to her face she was a beautiful little angel ! In short, a more lovely and amiable being than Eliza Herbert surely never adorned the ranks of humanity. The only fear which incessantly haunted those around her, and kept Sir —— in a feverish flutter of apprehension every day of his life, was, that his niece was, in his own words, “ too good—too beautiful, for this world ;” and that unseen messengers from above were already flitting around her, ready to claim her suddenly for the skies. He has often described to me his feelings on this subject. He seemed conscious that he had no *right* to reckon on the continuance of her life ; he felt, whenever he thought of her, an involuntary apprehension that she would, at no distant period, suddenly fade from his sight ; he was afraid, he said, to let out the whole of his heart’s affections on her. Like the Oriental merchant, who trembles while freighting “ one bark—one little fragile bark,” with the dazzling stores of his immense ALL, and committing it to the capricious dominion of wind and waves ; so Sir —— often declared, that, at the period I am alluding to, he experienced cruel misgivings, that if he embarked the whole of his soul’s loves on little Eliza Herbert, they were fated to be shipwrecked. Yet he regarded her every day with feelings which soon heightened into absolute idolatry !

His fond anxieties soon suggested to him, that so deli-

cate and fragile a being as his niece, supposing for a moment the existence of any real grounds of apprehension that her constitution bore an hereditary taint, could not be thrown into a directer path for her grave, than in India ; that any latent tendency to consumption would be quickened and developed with fatal rapidity in the burning atmosphere she was then breathing. His mind, once thoroughly suffused with alarms of this sort, could not ever afterwards be dispossessed of them ; and he accordingly determined to relinquish his situation in India, the instant he should have realized, from one quarter or another, sufficient to enable him to return to England, and support an establishment suitable to his station in society. About five years had elapsed since his arrival in India, during which he had contrived to save a large portion of his very ample income, when news reached him that a considerable fortune had fallen to him, through the death of a remote relative. The intelligence made him, comparatively, a happy man. He instantly set on foot arrangements for returning to England, and procuring the immediate appointment of his successor.

Unknown to his niece, about a year after his arrival in India, Sir —— had confidentially consulted the most eminent physician on the spot. In obedience to the injunctions of the Baronet, Dr C—— was in the habit of dropping in frequently, as if accidentally, *to dinner*, for the purpose of marking Miss Herbert's demeanour, and ascertaining whether there was, so to speak, the very faintest *adumbration* of any consumptive tendency. But no—his quick and practised eye detected no morbid indications ; and he repeatedly gladdened the Baronet's heart, by assuring him, that, for any present evidence

to the contrary, little Miss Herbert bade as fair for long and healthy life as any woman breathing, especially if she soon returned to the more salubrious climate of England. Though Dr C—— had never spoken professionally to her, Eliza Herbert was too quick and shrewd an observer, to continue unapprized of the object of his frequent visits to her uncle's house. She had not failed to notice his searching glances ; and knew well that he watched almost every mouthful of food she ate, and scrutinized all her movements. He had once also ventured to feel her pulse, in a half-in-earnest half-in-joke manner, and put one or two questions to the governess about Miss Herbert's general habits, which that good, easy, communicative creature unfortunately *told* her inquisitive little pupil !

Now there are few things more alarming and irritating to young people, even if consciously enjoying the most robust health, than suddenly to find that they have long been, and still are, the objects of anxious medical *surveillance*. They begin naturally to suspect that there must be very good reason for it—and especially in the case of nervous, irritable temperaments ; their peace of mind is thenceforward destroyed by torturing apprehensions that they are the doomed victims of some insidious, incurable malady. Of this I have known very many illustrations. Sir ——, also, was aware of its ill consequences, and endeavoured to avert even the shadow of a suspicion from his niece's mind as to the real object of Dr C——'s visits, by formally introducing him, from the first, as one of his own intimate friends. He therefore flattered himself that his niece was profoundly ignorant of the existence of his anxieties concerning her health ;

and was not a littled startled one morning by Miss Herbert's abruptly entering his study, and, pale with ill-disguised anxiety, inquiring if there was "any thing the matter with her?" Was she unconsciously *falling into a decline*? she asked, almost in so many words. Her uncle was so confounded by the suddenness of the affair, that he lost his presence of mind, changed colour a little, and, with a consciously embarrassed air, assured her that it was "no such thing," quite a mistake—a "very ridiculous one"—a "childish whim," &c. &c. &c. He was so *very* earnest and energetic in his assurances, that there was no earthly ground for apprehension, and, in short, concealed his alarm so clumsily, that his poor niece, though she left him with a kiss and a smile, and affected to be satisfied, retired to her own room, and from that melancholy moment resigned herself to her grave. Of this, she herself, three years subsequently, in England, assured me. She never afterwards recovered that gentle buoyancy and elasticity of spirits which made her burst upon her few friends and acquaintance like a little lively sunbeam of cheerfulness and gaiety. She felt perpetually haunted by gloomy, though vague suspicions, that there was something *radically wrong* in her constitution—that it was from her birth sown with the seeds of death—and that no earthly power could eradicate them. Though she resigned herself to the dominion of such harassing thoughts as these while alone, and even shed tears abundantly, she succeeded in banishing to a great extent, her uncle's disquietude, by assuming even greater gaiety of demeanour than before. The Baronet took occasion to mention the little incident above related to Dr C——; and was excessively agitated to see the physician assume a very serious air.

“ This may be attended with more mischief than you are aware of, Sir ——,” he replied. “ I feel it my duty to tell you how miserably unfortunate for her it is, that Miss Herbert has at last detected your restless uneasiness about her health, and the means you have taken to watch her constitution. Henceforward she may *appear* satisfied—but mark me if she can ever forget it. You will find her fall frequently into momentary fits of absence and thoughtfulness. She will brood over it,” continued Dr C——.

“ Why, good God ! Doctor,” replied the Baronet, “ what’s the use of frightening one thus ? Do you think my niece is the first girl who has known that her friends are anxious about her health ? If she is really, as you tell her, free from disease—why, in the name of common sense ! can she *fancy* herself into a consumption ? ”

“ No, no, Sir ——; but incessant alarm may accelerate the evil you dread, and predispose her to sink—her energies to droop—under the blow, however lightly it may at first fall, which has been so long impending. And, besides, Sir ——, I did *not* say she was free from disease, but only that I had not discerned any present *symptoms* of disease.”

“ Oh, stuff, stuff, Doctor ! nonsense ! ” muttered the Baronet, rising and pacing the room with excessive agitation. “ Can’t the girl be *laughed* out of her fears ? ”

It may be easily believed that Sir —— spent every future moment of his stay in India in an agony of apprehension. His fears exaggerated the slightest indication of his niece’s temporary indisposition into a symptom of consumption. Any thing like a cough from her would send him to a pillow of thorns ; and her occa-

sional refusal of food at meal-times was received with undisguised trepidation on the part of her uncle. If he overtook her at a distance, walking out with her governess, he would follow unperceived, and strain his eyesight with endeavouring to detect any thing like feebleness in her gait. These incessant, and very natural anxieties about the only being he loved in the world, enhanced by his efforts to conceal them, sensibly impaired his own health and spirits. He grew fretful and irritable in his demeanour towards every member of his establishment, and could not completely fix his thoughts for the transaction of his important official business.

This may be thought an overstrained representation of Sir ——'s state of mind respecting his niece ; but by none except a young, thoughtless, or heartless reader. Let the thousand—the million—heart-wrung *parents*, who have mourned, and are now mourning, over their consumptive offspring—let *them*, I say, echo the truth of the sentiments I am expressing. Let those whose bitter fate it is to see

The bark, so richly freighted with their love,
gradually sinking, shipwrecked before their very eyes,
—let *them* say, whether the pen or tongue of man can
furnish adequate words to give expression to their anguished feelings !

Eighteen years of age—within a trifle—was Miss Herbert, when she again set foot on her native land, and the eyes and heart of her idolizing uncle leaped for joy to see her augmented health and loveliness, which he fondly flattered himself might now be destined to

Grow with her growth, and strengthen with her strength.

The voyage—though long and monotonous as usual—with its fresh breezy balminess, had given an impetus to her animal spirits ; and as her slight figure stepped down the side of the gloomy colossal Indiaman which had brought her across the seas, her blue eye was bright as that of a seraph, her beauteous cheeks glowed with a soft and rich crimson, and there was a lightness, ease, and elasticity in her movements, as she tripped the short distance between the vessel and the carriage, which was in waiting to convey them to town, that filled her doating uncle with feelings of almost frenzied joy.

“ God Almighty bless thee, my darling !—Bless thee—bless thee for ever, my pride ! my jewel !—Long and happy be thy life in merry England !” sobbed the Baronet, folding her almost convulsively in his arms, as soon as they were seated in the carriage, and giving her the first kiss of welcome to her native shores. The second day after they were established at one of the hotels, while Miss Herbert and her governess were riding the round of fashionable shopping, Sir —— drove alone to the late Dr Baillie. In a long interview (they were personal friends) he communicated all his distressing apprehensions about his niece’s state of health, imploring him to say whether he had any real cause of alarm whatever—immediate or prospective—and what course and plan of life he would recommend for the future. Dr Baillie, after many and minute inquiries, contented himself with saying, that he saw no grounds for *present* apprehensions. “ It certainly did *sometimes* happen,” he said—“ that a delicate daughter of a consumptive parent, inherited her mother’s tendencies to disease.”—“ As for her future life and habits, there was not the slightest oc-

casion for medicine of any kind; she must live almost entirely in the country, take plenty of fresh dry air and exercise—especially eschew late hours and company;” and he hinted, finally, the advantages, and almost necessity, of an early matrimonial engagement.

It need hardly be said, that Sir —— resolved most religiously to follow this advice to the letter.

“ I’ll come and dine with you in Dover Street, at seven to-day,” said Dr Baillie, “and make my own observations.”

“ Thank you Doctor—but—but we dine out to-day,” muttered the Baronet, rather faintly, adding, inwardly, “ No, no !—no more medical *espionage*—no, no !”

Sir —— purchased a very beautiful mansion, which then happened to be for sale, situated within ten or twelve miles of London; and thither he removed, as soon as ever the preliminary arrangements could be completed.

The shrine, and its divinity, were worthy of each other. —— Hall was one of the most charming picturesque residences in the county. It was a fine antique semi-Gothic structure, almost obscured from sight in the profound gloom of forest shade. The delicious velvet greensward, spread immediately in front of the house, seemed formed for the gentle footsteps of Miss Herbert. When you went there, if you looked carefully about, you might discover a little white tuft glistening on some part or other of the “ smooth soft-shaven lawn;” it was her pet lamb,—sweet emblem of its owner’s innocence !—cropping the crisp and rich herbage. Little thing ! it would scarcely submit to be fondled by any hand but that of its indulgent mistress. She, also, might, occa-

sionally, be seen there, wandering thoughtfully along, with a book in her hand—Tasso, probably, or Dante—and her loose light hair straying from beneath a gipsy bonnet, commingling in pleasant contrast with a saffron-coloured riband. Her uncle would sit for an hour together, at a corner of his study window, overlooking the lawn, and never remove his eyes from the figure of his fair niece.

Miss Herbert was soon talked of every where in the neighbourhood, as the pride of the place—the star of the county. She budded forth almost visibly ; and though her exquisite form was developing daily, till her matured womanly proportions seemed to have been cast in the mould of the Venus de Medici, though on a scale of more slenderness and delicacy, it was, nevertheless, outstripped by the precocious expanding of her intellect. The sympathies of her soul were attuned to the deepest and most refined sentiment. She was passionately fond of poetry ; and never wandered without the sphere of what was first-rate. Dante and Milton were her constant companions, by day and night ; and it was a treat to hear the mellifluous cadences of the former uttered by the soft and rich voice of Miss Herbert. She could not more satisfactorily evidence her profound appreciation of the true spirit of poetry, than by her almost idolatrous admiration of the kindred genius of Handel and Mozart. She was scarcely ever known to play any other music than theirs ; she would listen to none but the “ mighty voices of those dim spirits.” And then she was the most amiable and charitable creature, that sure ever trode the earth ! How many colds—slight, to be sure, and evanescent—had she caught, and how

many rebukes from the alarmed fondness of her uncle had she suffered in consequence, through her frequent visits, in all weathers, to the cottages of the poor and sick!—"You are describing an *ideal* being, and investing it with all the graces and virtues—one that never really existed," perhaps exclaims one of my readers. There are not a few now living, who could answer for the truth of my poor and faint description, with anguish and regret. Frequently, on seeing such instances of precocious development of the powers of both mind and body, the curt and forcible expression of Quintilian has occurred to my mind with painful force—"Quod observatum fere est, celerius occidere *festinatam maturitatem*,"* aptly rendered by the English proverb, "Soon ripe, soon rotten."

The latter part of Dr Baillie's advice was anxiously kept in view by Sir —; and soon after Miss Herbert had completed her twentieth year, he had the satisfaction of seeing her encourage the attentions of a Captain —, the third son of a neighbouring nobleman. He was a remarkably fine and handsome young man, of a very superior spirit, and fully capable of appreciating the value of her whose hand he sought. Sir — was delighted, almost to ecstasy, when he extracted from the trembling, blushing girl, a confession that Captain —'s company was any thing but disagreeable to her. The young military hero was, of course, soon recognised as her suitor; and a handsome couple, people said, they would make. Miss Herbert's health seemed more robust, and her spirits more buoyant, than ever. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when she was daily riding in an

* *De Inst. Orat.* Lib. iv. In præmio.

open carriage, or on horseback, over a fine, breezy, champagne country, by the side of the gay, handsome, fascinating Captain —— ?

The Baronet was sitting one morning in his study, having the day before returned from a month's visit to some friends in Ireland, and engaged with some important letters from India, when Miss B——, his niece's governess, sent a message, requesting to speak in private with him. When she entered, her embarrassed, and somewhat flurried manner, not a little surprised Sir ——.

“ How is Eliza ?—How is Eliza, Miss B —— ?” he inquired hastily, laying aside his reading glasses. “ Very well,” she replied, “ very ;” and, after a little fencing about the necessity of making allowance for the exaggeration of alarm and anxiety, she proceeded to inform him, that Miss Herbert had latterly passed restless nights—that her sleep was not unfrequently broken by a cough—a sort of faint *churchyard* cough, she said, it seemed—which had not been noticed for some time, till it was accompanied by other symptoms.—“ Gracious God ! madam, how was this not told me before ?—Why—Why did you not write to me in Ireland about it ?” inquired Sir ——, with excessive trepidation. He could scarcely sit in his chair, and grew very pale ; while Miss B——, herself equally agitated, went on to mention profuse night-sweats—a disinclination for food—exhaustion from the slightest exercise—a feverishness every evening—and a faint hectic flush ——

“ Oh, *plague-spot* !” groaned the Baronet, almost choked, letting fall his reading glasses. He tottered towards the bell, and the valet was directed to order the carriage for town immediately. “ What—what possible excuse can I devise for bringing Dr Baillie here ?” said

he to the governess, as he was drawing on his gloves. "Well—well—I'll leave it to you—do what you can. For God's sake, madam, prepare her to see him somehow or another, for the Doctor and I shall certainly be here together this evening.—Oh! say I'm called up to town on sudden business, and thought I might as well bring him on with me, as he is visiting a patient in the neighbourhood—Oh! any thing, madam—any thing." He hardly knew what he was saying.

Dr Baillie, however, could not come, being himself at Brighton, an invalid, and the Baronet was, therefore, pleased, though with ill-disguised chagrin, to summon me to supply his place. On my way down, he put me in possession of most of the facts above narrated. He implored me, in tenderness to his agitated feelings, to summon all the tact I had ever acquired, and alarm the object of my visit as little as possible. I was especially to guard against appearing to know too much; I was to beat about the bush—to extract her symptoms gradually, &c. I never saw the fondest, the most doating father or mother more agitated about an only child, than was Sir——about his niece. He protested that he could not survive her death—that she was the only prop and pride of his declining years—and that he must fall if he lost her; and made use of many similar expressions. It was in vain that I besought him not to allow himself to be carried so much away by his fears. He must let me see her, and have an opportunity of judging whether there were any real cause of alarm, I said; and he might rely on my honour as a gentleman, that I would be frank and candid with him, to the very utmost—I would tell him the worst. I reminded him of the possibility that

the symptoms he mentioned might¹ not really exist ; that they might have been seen by Miss B—— through the distorting and magnifying medium of apprehension ; and that, even if they did *really* exist—why, that—that—they were not *always* the precursors of consumption, I stammered, against my own convictions. It is impossible to describe the emotions excited in the Baronet, by my simply uttering the word “consumption.” He said it stabbed him to the heart !

On arriving at —— Hall, the Baronet and I instantly repaired to the drawing-room, where Miss Herbert and her governess were sitting at tea. The sad sunlight of September shone through the Gothic window near which they were sitting. Miss Herbert was dressed in white, and looked really dazzlingly beautiful ; but the first transient glance warned me that the worst might be apprehended. I had that very morning been at the bedside of a dying young lady, a martyr to that very disease, which commences by investing its victim with a tenfold splendour of personal beauty, to be compensated for by sudden and rapid decay ! Miss Herbert’s eyes were lustrous as diamonds ; and the complexion of her cheeks, pure and fair as that of the lily, was surmounted with an intense circumscribed crimson flush,—alas, alas ! the very plague-spot of hectic—of consumption. She saluted me silently, and her eyes glanced hurriedly from me to her uncle, and from him again to me. His disordered air defied disguise.

She was evidently apprized of my coming, as well as of the occasion of my visit. Indeed, there was a visible embarrassment about all four of us, which I felt I was expected to dissipate, by introducing indifferent topics

of conversation. This I attempted, but with little success. Miss Herbert's tea was before her on a little ebony stand, untouched; and it was evidently a violent effort only that enabled her to continue in the room. She looked repeatedly at Miss B——, as though she wished to be gone. After about half an hour's time, I alluded complimentarily to what I had heard of her performance on the piano. She smiled coldly, and rather contemptuously, as though she saw the part I was playing. Nothing daunted, however, I begged her to favour me with one of Haydn's sonatas; and she went immediately to the piano, and played what I asked—I need hardly say, exquisitely. Her uncle then withdrew for the alleged purpose of answering a letter, as had been arranged between us; and I was left alone with the two ladies. I need not fatigue the reader with a minute description of all that passed. I introduced the object of my visit as casually and gently as I could, and succeeded more easily than I had anticipated in quieting her alarms. The answers she gave to my questions amply corroborated the truth of the account given by Miss B—— to the Baronet. Her feverish accelerated pulse, also, told of the hot blighting breathings of the destroying angel, who was already hovering close around his victim!—I was compelled to smile with an assumed air of gaiety and nonchalance, while listening to the poor girl's unconscious disclosures of various little matters which amounted to infallible evidence that she was already beyond the reach of medicine. I bade her adieu, complimenting her on her charming looks, and expressing my delight at finding so little occasion for my professional services! She looked at me with a half-incredulous, half-confiding

eye, and with much girlish simplicity and frankness, put her hand into mine, thanking me for dispersing her fears, and begging me to do the same for her uncle. I afterwards learned, that as soon as I left the room, she burst into a flood of tears, and sighed and sobbed all the rest of the evening.

With Sir —— I felt it my duty to be candid. Why should I conceal the worst from him, when I felt as certain as I was of my own existence, that his beautiful niece was already beginning to wither away from before his eyes? Convinced that “hope deferred maketh sick the heart,” I have always, in such cases, warned the patient’s friends, long beforehand, of the inevitable fate awaiting the object of their anxious hopes and fears, in order that resignation might gradually steal thoroughly into their broken hearts. To return; I was conducted to the Baronet’s study, where he was standing with his hat and gloves on, ready to accompany me as far as the high-road, in order that I might await the arrival of a London coach. I told him, in short, that I feared I had seen and heard too much to allow a doubt that his niece’s present symptoms were those of the commencing stage of pulmonary consumption; and that though medicine and change of climate might possibly avert the evil day for a time, it was my melancholy duty to assure him, that no earthly power could save her.

“Merciful God!” he gasped, loosing his arm from mine, and leaning against the park gate, at which we had arrived. I implored him to be calm. He continued speechless for some time, with his hands clasped.

“Oh, Doctor, Doctor!” he exclaimed, as if a gleam of hope had suddenly flashed across his mind, “we’ve

forgot to tell you a most material thing, which perhaps will alter the whole case—oh! how could we have forgotten it?" he continued, growing heated with the thought; "my niece *eats* very heartily—nay, more heartily than any of us, and seems to relish her food more." Alas! I was obliged, as I have hundreds of times before been obliged, to dash the cup from his lips, by assuring him that an almost *ravenous* appetite was as invariably a forerunner of consumption as the pilot fish of the shark!

"Oh, great God! what will become of me? What shall I do?" he exclaimed, almost frantic, and wringing his hands in despair. He had lost every vestige of self-control. "Then my sweet angel must DIE! Damning thought! Oh, let me die too! I cannot—I will not—survive her!—Doctor, Doctor, you must give up your London practice, and come and live in my house—you must! Oh, come, come, and I'll fling my whole fortune at your feet! Only save her, and you and yours shall roll in wealth, if I go back to India to procure it!—Oh, whither—whither shall I go with my darling? To Italy—to France? My God! What shall I do when she is *gone*—for ever!" he exclaimed, like one distracted. I entreated him to recollect himself, and endeavour to regain his self-possession before returning to the presence of his niece. He started. "Oh, mockery, Doctor, mockery! How can I ever look on the dear—the doomed girl again? She is no longer mine; she is in her grave—she is!"

Remonstrance and expostulation, I saw, were utterly useless, and worse, for they served only to irritate. The coach shortly afterwards drew up; and wringing my hands, Sir —— extorted a promise that I would see his

niece the next day, and bring Dr Baillie with me, if he should have returned to town. I was as good as my word, except that Dr Baillie could not accompany me, being still at Brighton. My second interview with Miss Herbert was long and painfully interesting. We were alone. She wept bitterly, and recounted the incident mentioned above, which occurred in India, and occasioned her first serious alarm. She felt convinced, she told me, that her case was hopeless; she saw, too, that her uncle possessed a similar conviction, and sobbed agonizingly when she alluded to his altered looks. She had felt a presentiment, she said, for some months past, which, however, she had never mentioned till then, that her days were numbered, and attributed, too truly, her accelerated illness to the noxious climate of India. She described her sensations to be that of a constant void within, as if there were a something wanting—an unnatural hollowness—a dull, deep aching in the left side—a frequent inclination to relieve herself by spitting, which, when she did, alas! alas! she observed more than once to be streaked with blood.

“How long do you think I have to live, Doctor?” she inquired faintly.

“Oh, my dear girl, do not, for Heaven’s sake, ask such useless questions!—How can I possibly presume to answer them, giving you credit for a spark of common sense?” She grew very pale, and drew her handkerchief across her forehead.

“Is it likely that I shall have to endure much pain?” she asked with increasing trepidation. I could reply only, that I *hoped* not—that there was no ground for *immediate* apprehension—and I faltered, that *possibly* a

milder climate, and the skill of medicine, might yet carry her through. The poor girl shook her head hopelessly, and trembled violently from head to foot.

“ Oh, poor unele !—Poor, poor Edw——.” She faltered, and fell fainting into my arms ; for the latter allusion to Captain —— had completely overcome her. Holding her senseless sylphlike figure in my arms, I hurried to the bell, and was immediately joined by Sir ——, the governess, and one or two female attendants. I saw the Baronet was beginning to behave like a madman, by the increasing boisterousness of his manner, and the occasional glare of wildness that shot from his eye. With the utmost difficulty I succeeded in forcing him from the room, and keeping him out till Miss Herbert had recovered.

“ Oh, Doctor, Doctor !” he muttered hoarsely, after staggering to a seat, “ this is worse than death ! I pray God to take her and me too, and put an end to our misery !”

I expostulated with him rather sternly, and represented to him the absurdity and impiousness of his wish.

“ ——,” he thundered, starting from his chair, and stamping furiously to and fro across the room, “ What do you mean by drivelling in that way, Doctor ? Can I see my darling dying—absolutely dying by inches—before my very eyes, and yet be cool and unconcerned ? I did not expect such conduct from you, Doctor.” He burst into tears. “ Oh ! I’m going mad !—I’m going mad !” he groaned, and sank again into his seat. From one or two efforts he made to force down the emotions which were swelling and dilating his whole frame, I seriously apprehended either that he would fall into a fit, or go raving

mad. Happily, however, I was mistaken. His excitement gradually subsided. He was a man of remarkably strong and ardent feelings, which he had never been accustomed to control, even in the moments of their most violent manifestations; and on the present occasion, the maddening thought, that the object of his long, intense, and idolizing love and pride was about to be lost to him irretrievably—for ever—was sufficient to overturn his shaken intellects. I prevailed upon him to continue where he was, till I returned from his niece, for I was summoned to her chamber. I found her lying on the bed, only partially undressed. Her beautiful auburn hair hung disordered over her neck and shoulders, partially concealing her lovely marble-hued features. Her left hand covered her eyes, and her right clasped a little locket, suspended round her neck by a plain black riband, containing a little of Captain ——'s hair. Miss B——, her governess, her maid, and the housekeeper, with tears and sobs, were engaged in rendering various little services to their unfortunate young mistress; and my heart ached to think of the little—the nothing—I could do for her.

Two days afterwards, Dr Baillie, another physician, and myself, went down to see Miss Herbert; for a note from Miss B—— informed me that her ward had suffered severely from the agitation experienced at the last visit I had paid her, and was in a low nervous fever. The consumptive symptoms, also, were beginning to gleam through the haze of accidental indisposition with fearful distinctness! Dr Baillie simply assured the Baronet that my predictions were but too likely to be verified; and that the only chance of averting the worst form of consumption (a galloping one) would be an in-

stant removal to Italy, that the fall of the year, and the winter season, might be spent in a more genial and fostering climate. We, at the same time, frankly assured Sir ——, who listened with a sullen, despairing apathy of manner, that the utmost he had to expect from a visit to Italy, was the chance of a temporary suspension of the fate which hovered over his niece.—In a few weeks, accordingly, they were all settled at Naples.

But what have I to say, all this time, the reader is possibly asking, about the individual who was singled out by fate for the first and heaviest stroke inflicted by Miss Herbert's approaching dissolution? Where was the lover? Where was Captain ——? I have avoided allusions to him hitherto, because his distress and agitation transcended all my powers of description. He loved Miss Herbert with all the passionate romantic fervour of a first attachment; and the reader must ask his own heart, what were the feelings by which that of Captain —— was lacerated.

I shall content myself with recording one little incident which occurred before the family of Sir —— left for Italy. I was retiring one night to rest, about twelve o'clock, when the startling summons of the night-bell brought me again down stairs, accompanied by a servant. Thrice the bell rang with impatient violence before the door could possibly be opened, and I heard the steps of some vehicle let down hastily.

"Is Dr —— at home?" inquired a groom, and being answered in the affirmative, in a second or two a gentleman leaped from a chariot standing at the door, and hurried into the room, whither I had retired to await him. He was in a sort of half military travelling dress. His

face was pale, his eye sunk, his air disordered, and his voice thick and hurried. It was Captain ——, who had been absent on a shooting excursion in Scotland, and who had not received intelligence of the alarming symptoms disclosed by Miss Herbert, till within four days of that which found him at my house, on the present occasion, come to ascertain from me the *reality* of the melancholy apprehensions so suddenly entertained by Sir —— and the other members of both families.

“ Gracious God ! Is there no hope, Doctor ! ” he inquired faintly, after swallowing a glass of wine, which, seeing his exhaustion and agitation, I had sent for. I endeavoured to evade giving a direct answer—attempted to divert his thoughts towards the projected trip to the Continent—dilated on the soothing, balmy climate she would have to breathe—it *had* done wonders for others, &c.—and, in a word, exhausted the stock of inefficient subterfuges and palliatives to which all professional men are, on such occasions, compelled to resort. Captain —— listened to me silently, while his eye was fixed on me with a vacant, unobserving stare. His utter wretchedness touched me to the soul ; and yet, what consolation had I to offer him ? After several profound sighs, he exclaimed, in a flurried tone, “ I see how it is. Her fate is fixed—and so is mine ! Would to God—would to God, I had never seen or known Miss Herbert ! —*What* will become of us ! ” He rose to go. “ Doctor, forgive me for troubling you so late, but really I can rest nowhere ! I must go back to —— Hall.” I shook hands with him, and in a few moments the chariot dashed off.

Really I can scarcely conceive of a more dreadful state

of mind than that of Captain ——, or of any one whose “heart is in the right place,” to use a homely but apt expression, when placed in such wretched circumstances as those above related. To see the death-warrant sealed of her a man’s soul dotes on—who is the idolized object of his holiest, fondest, and possibly *first* affections ! Yes, to see her bright and beautiful form suddenly snatched down into “utter darkness” by the cold relentless grasp of our common foe—“the desire of our eyes taken away as with a stroke”—may well wither one. That man’s soul which would not be palsied—prostrated, by such a stroke as this, is worthless, and worse—it is a libel on his kind. He cannot *love* a woman as she should and must be loved. But why am I so vehement in expressing my feelings on this subject ? Because, in the course of my professional intercourse, my soul has been often sickened with listening to the expression of opposite sentiments. The poor and pitiful *philosophy*—that the word should ever have been so prostituted !—which is now sneaking in among us, fostered by foolish lads, and men with hollow hearts and barren brains, for the purpose of weeding out from the soul’s garden its richest and choicest flowers, sympathy and sentiment—*this* philosophy may possibly prompt some reader to sneer over the agonies I have been attempting to describe ; but, O reader ! do you eschew it—trample on it whenever, wherever you find it, for the reptile, though very little, is very venomous.

Captain ——’s regiment was ordered to Ireland, and as he found it impossible to accompany it, he sold out, and presently followed the heart-broken Baronet and his niece to Italy. The delicious climate sufficed to kindle

and foster for a while that deceitful *ignis fatuus*—hope which always flits before in the gloomy horizon of consumptive patients, and leads them and their friends on—and on—and on—till it suddenly sinks quivering into their grave ! They staid at Naples till the month of July. Miss Herbert was sinking, and that with' fearfully accelerated rapidity. Sir ——'s health was much impaired with incessant anxiety and watching ; and Captain —— had been several times on the very borders of madness. His love for the dear being who could never be his, increased ten thousand fold when he found it hopeless !—Is it not always so ?

Aware that her days were numbered, Miss Herbert anxiously importuned her uncle to return to England. She wished, she said, to breathe her last in her native isle—among the green pastures and hills of ——shire, and to be buried beside her father and mother. Sir —— listened to the utterance of these sentiments with a breaking heart. He could see no reason for refusing a compliance with her request ; and, accordingly, the latter end of August beheld the unhappy family once more at —— Hall.

I once saw a very beautiful lily, of rather more than ordinary stateliness, whose stem had been snapped by the storm over-night ; and on entering my garden in the morning, there, alas, alas ! lay the pride of all chaste flowers, pallid and prostrate on the very bed where it had a short while before bloomed so sweetly ! This little circumstance was forcibly recalled to my recollection, on seeing Miss Herbert for the first time after her return from the Continent. It was in the spacious drawing-room at —— Hall, where I had before seen her, in the

evening ; and she was reclining on an ottoman, which had been drawn towards the large fretted Gothic window formerly mentioned. I stole towards it with noiseless footsteps ; for the hushing, cautioning movements of those present warned me that Miss Herbert was asleep. I stood and gazed in silence for some moments on the lovely unfortunate—almost afraid to disturb her, even by breathing. She was wasted almost to a shadow,—attenuated to nearly ethereal delicacy and transparency. She was dressed in a plain white muslin gown, and lying on an Indian shawl, in which she had been enveloped for the purpose of being brought down from her bed-chamber. Her small foot and ankle were concealed beneath white silk stockings, and satin slippers—through which it might be seen how they were shrunk from the full dimensions of health. They seemed, indeed, rather the exquisite chiselling of Canova, the representation of recumbent beauty, than flesh and blood, and scarcely capable of sustaining even the slight pressure of Miss Herbert's wasted frame. The arms and hands were enveloped in long white gloves, which fitted very loosely ; and her waist, encircled by a broad violet-coloured riband, was rather that of a young girl of twelve or thirteen, than a full grown woman. But it was her countenance—her symmetrical features, sunk, faded, and damp with death-dews, and her auburn hair falling in rich matted careless clusters down each side of her alabaster temples and neck ; it was all this which suggested the bitterest thoughts of blighted beauty, almost breaking the heart of the beholder. Perfectly motionless and statue-like lay that fair creature, breathing so imperceptibly, that a rose-leaf might have slept on her lips unfluttered ! On an easy-

chair, drawn, towards the head of the ottoman, sat her uncle, Sir ——, holding a white handkerchief in his hand, with which he from time to time wiped off the dews which started out incessantly on his niece's pallid forehead. It was affecting to see his hair changed to a dull iron gray hue ; whereas, before he had left for the Continent, it was jet black. His sallow and worn features bore the traces of recent tears.

And where *now* is the lover? Where is Captain ——? again inquires the reader. He was then at Milan, raving beneath the tortures and delirium of a brain fever, which flung him on his sick-bed only the day before Sir ——'s family set out for England. Miss Herbert had not been told of the circumstance till she arrived at home ; and those who communicated the intelligence will never undertake such a duty again !

After some time, in which we around had maintained perfect silence, Miss Herbert gently opened her eyes ; and seeing me sitting opposite her uncle, by her side, gave me her hand, and, with a faint smile, whispered some words of welcome which I could not distinguish.

"Am I much altered, Doctor, since you saw me last?" she presently inquired, in a more audible tone. I said I regretted to see her so feeble and emaciated.

"And does not my poor uncle also look very ill?" inquired the poor girl, eyeing him with a look of sorrowful fondness. She feebly extended her arms, as if for the purpose of putting them round his neck, and he seized and kissed them with such fervour, that she burst into tears. "Your kindness is killing me—oh ! don't, don't !" she murmured. He was so overpowered with his emotions, that he abruptly rose and left the room.

I then made many minute inquiries about the state of her health. I could hardly detect any pulsation at the wrist, though the blue veins, and almost the arteries, I fancied, might be seen meandering beneath the transparent skin.

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My feelings will not allow me, nor would my space, to describe every interview I had with her. She sank very rapidly. She exhibited all those sudden deceitful rallyings, which invariably agonize consumptive patients and their friends with fruitless hopes of recovery. Oh, how they are clung to ! how hard to persuade their fond hearts to relinquish them ! with what despairing obstinacy will they persist in “hoping against hope !” I recollect one evening, in particular, that her shattered energies were so unaccountably revived and collected, her eye grew so full and bright, her cheeks were suffused with so rich a vermillion, her voice soft and sweet as ever, and her spirits so exhilarated, that even *I* was staggered for a moment ; and poor Sir —— got so excited, that he said to me in a sort of ecstasy, as he accompanied me to my carriage, “ Ah, Doctor, a *phœnix* !—Doctor, a *phœnix* ! She’s rising from her ashes—ah ! ha ! She’ll cheat you for once—darling !” and he raised his handkerchief to his eyes, for they were overflowing.

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“ Doctor, you’re fond of music, I believe ; you wo’nt have any objection to listen to a little now, will you ?—I’m exactly in the mood for it, and it’s almost the only enjoyment I have left, and Miss B—— plays enchantingly. Go, love, please, and play a mass from Mozart—the one we listened to last night,” said Miss Herbert,

on one occasion, about a week after the interview last mentioned. Miss B——, who was in tears, immediately rose, and took her seat at the piano. She played exquisitely. I held one of my sweet patient's hands in mine, as she lay on the sofa, with her face turned towards the window, through which the retiring sunlight was streaming in tender radiance on her wasted features, after tinting richly the amber-hued groves which were visible through the window. I need not attempt to characterise the melting music which Miss B—— was pouring from the piano. I have often thought that there is a sort of *spiritual* character about some of the masses of Mozart, which draws out the greatest sympathies of one's nature, striking the deepest and most hidden chords of the human heart. On the present occasion, the peculiar circumstances in which I was placed,—the time, the place, the dying angel whose hand was clasped in mine,—disposed me to a more intense appreciation of Mozart's music than I had ever known before. The soft, soothing, solemn, swelling cadences undulated one after another into my full heart, till they forced the tears to gush from my eyes. I was utterly overcome. Oh, that languishing, heart-breaking music I can never forget! The form of Eliza Herbert flits before me to this day when I hear it spoken of. I will not listen to any one *play* it now—though I have often wept since on hearing it from Miss B——, to whom Miss Herbert bequeathed her piano. But, to return: My tears flowed fast; and I perceived also the crystal drops oozing through the closed eyelids of Miss Herbert. “Heart-breaking music, is it not, Doctor?” she murmured. I could make her no reply. I felt at that moment as if I could have

laid down my life for her. After a long pause, Miss B—— continuing all the while playing, Miss Herbert sobbed—" Oh, how I should like to be buried while the organ is playing this music ! And HE—HE was fond of it, too !" she continued, with a long shuddering sigh. It was echoed, to my surprise, but in a profounder tone, from that quarter of the room where the grand piano was placed. It could not have been from Miss B——, I felt sure ; and, looking towards her, I beheld the dim outline of Sir ——'s figure leaning against the piano, with his face buried in his white handkerchief. He had stolen into the room unperceived ; for he had left it half an hour before, in a fit of sudden agitation, and, after continuing about five minutes, was compelled, by his feelings, again to retire. His sigh, and the noise he made in withdrawing, had been heard by Miss Herbert.

" Doctor—Doctor !" she stammered faintly, turning as white as ashes, " who—who is that ?—what was it ?—Oh dear ! it can never be—no—no—it cannot"—and she suddenly fainted. She continued so long insensible, that I began to fear it was all over. Gradually, however, she recovered, and was carried up to bed, which she did not leave again for a week.

I mentioned, I think, in a former part of this narrative, Miss Herbert's partiality for poetry, and that her readings were confined to that which was of the highest order. Among the MSS. found in her desk, poor girl, after her decease, were many extracts from the poets, copied in a beautiful hand, and evincing true taste in their selection. She was particularly partial to " Thomson's Seasons," especially " Winter," from which she

transcribed largely. There are also a few unpretending sonnets and stanzas of her own ; which, if not of first-rate excellence, breathe, nevertheless, the sweetest sentiments of virtue, simplicity, and delicacy. If I had been permitted, I should have liked to lay before the reader a little "Sonnet to a Dead Robin," and "To a Moss Rose." I have also often heard her, while sitting by her bedside, utter very beautiful thoughts, suggested by the bitterness of her own premature fate. All—all are treasured in my heart !

I have not attempted to describe her feelings with reference to Captain ——, simply because I cannot do them justice, without, perhaps, incurring the reader's suspicions that I am slipping into the character of the novelist. She did not know that Captain —— continued yet at death's door at Milan, for we felt bound to spare her feelings. We fabricated a story that he had been summoned into Egypt, to inquire after the fate of a brother who had travelled thither, and whose fate, we said, was doubtful. Poor girl ! she believed us at last—and seemed rather inclined to accuse him of unkindness for allowing *any thing* to withdraw him from her side. She never, however, *said* any thing directly of this kind. It is hardly necessary to say, that Captain —— never knew of the fiction. I have never, to this day, entirely forgiven myself for the part I took in it.

I found her one morning, within a few days of her death, wretchedly exhausted both in mind and body. She had passed, as usual, a restless night, unsoothed even by the laudanum, which had been administered to her in much larger quantities than her medical attendants had authorized. It had stupified, without at the same

time composing and calming her. Poor—poor girl ! almost the last remains of her beauty had disappeared. There was a fearful hollowness in her once lovely and blooming cheeks ; and her eyes—those bright orbs which had a short while ago dazzled and delighted all they shone upon—were now sunk, quenched, and surrounded by dark haloes ! She lay with her head buried deep in the pillow, and her hair folded back, matted with perspiration. Her hands—but I cannot attempt to describe her appearance any farther.

Sir —— sat by her bedside, as he had sat all through her illness, and was utterly worn out. I occupied the chair allotted to Miss B——, who had just retired to bed, having been up all night. After a long silence, Miss Herbert asked very faintly for some tea, which was presently brought her, and dropped into her mouth by spoonfuls. Soon after, she revived a little, and spoke to me, but in so low a whisper that I had great difficulty in distinguishing her words. The exertion of utterance, also, was attended with so much evident pain, that I would rather she had continued silent.

“ Laudanum—laudanum—laudanum, Doctor ! They don’t give me enough of laudanum !” she muttered. We made her no reply. Presently she began murmuring at intervals somewhat in this strain : “ Ah—among the Pyramids—looking at them—sketching—ascending them, perhaps—oh ! what if they should fall and crush him ? Has he found his brother ? On his way—home—sea—ships—ship.” Still we did not interrupt her, for her manner indicated only a dim dreamy sort of half-consciousness. About an hour afterwards (why did I linger there, it may be asked, when I could do nothing

for her, and could ill spare the time? I know not—I *could* not leave her) she again commenced in a low moaning, wandering tone—"Uncle! What do you think? Chatterton—poor melancholy Chatterton, sat by my side all night long, in that chair where Dr. — is sitting. He died of a broken heart—or of my disease, didn't he? Wan—wan—sad—cold—ghostly—but so like a poet! Oh, how he talked!—no one earthly like him! His voice was like the mysterious music of an Eolian harp—so solemn—soft—stealing!—— * * He put his icy fingers over my heart, and said *it* must soon be as cold! But he told me not to be afraid, nor weep, because I was dying so young—so early. He said I was a young rose-tree, and would have the longer to bloom and blossom when he came for me." She smiled faintly and sadly. "Oh, dear, dear!—I wish I had him here again! But he looks very cold and ghostly—never moves—nothing rustles—I never hear him come, or go—but I look, and there he is! And I'm not at all frightened, for he seems gentle; but I think he can't be happy—happy—never smiles, never!—— * * Dying people see and hear more than others!"

This, I say, is the *substance* of what she uttered. All she said was pervaded by a sad romance, which showed that her soul was deeply imbued with poetry.

"Toll!—toll!—toll!—How solemn!—White plumes!—white scarfs!—Hush!—'Earth to earth'—O dreadful! It is crumbling on my heart! They all go—they leave me all—poor, poor Eliza!—they leave me all alone in the cold church. *He'll* often walk in the church by himself—his tears will fall on the pavement—but I shall not hear him—nor see him! He will ne—ver see me! Will the organ play, I wonder? It *may* wake me from

sleep for a while !” I listened to all this, and was fit for nothing the rest of the day. Again—again I saw her, to let fall tears over the withered petals, the blighted blossoms, of early beauty ! It wrung my heart to see her little more than a breathing corpse. Oh, the gloom—anguish—desolation, diffused through —— Hall ! It could be *felt* ; it *oppressed* you, on entering !

* * * On Saturday morning, (the —— day of November, 18——,) I drove down early, having the preceding evening promised to be there as soon as possible the next day. It was a scowling November morning, and my heart sank within me as my chariot rattled rapidly along the hard highway towards —— Hall. But I was too LATE. The curtain had fallen, and hid poor Eliza Herbert from this world, for ever ! She had expired about half an hour before my arrival.

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As I was returning to town, after attending the funeral of Miss Herbert, full of bitter and sorrowful thoughts, I met a travelling carriage and four thundering down the road. It contained poor Captain ——, his valet, and a young Italian medical attendant—all just returned from the Continent. He looked white and wasted. The crape on my hat—my gloves—weepers—mourning suit, told all instantly. I was in a moment at his side—for he had swooned.

As for the disconsolate Baronet, little remains to be said. He disposed of —— Hall ; and, sick of England—ill and irritable—he attempted to regain his Indian appointment, but unsuccessfully ; so he betook himself to a solitary house belonging to the family in ——shire ; and, in the touching language of one of old, “ Went on mourning to the end of his days.”

CHAPTER X.

THE SPECTRAL DOG.

AN ILLUSION.

THE age of ghosts and hobgoblins is gone by, says worthy Dr Hibbert; and so, after him, says almost every body now-a-days. These mysterious visitants are henceforth to be resolved into mere optical delusions, acting on an excitable fancy—an irritable nervous temperament; and the report of a real *bona fide* ghost, or apparition, is utterly scouted. *Possibly* this may *not* be going too far, even though it *be* in the teeth of some of the most stubborn facts that are on record. One, or possibly two, of this character, I may perhaps present to the reader on a future occasion; but at present I shall content myself with relating a very curious and interesting case of acknowledged *optical delusion*; and I have no doubt that many of my medical readers can parallel it with similar occurrences within the sphere of their own observation.

Mr D—— was a clergyman of the Church of England, educated at Oxford,—a scholar, “a ripe and good

one,"—a man of remarkably acute and powerful understanding ; but, according to his own account, destitute of even an atom of imagination. He was also an exemplary minister ; preached twice, willingly, every Sunday, and performed all the other duties of his office with zealous fidelity, and to the full satisfaction of his parishioners. If any man is less likely to be terrified with ghosts, or has less *reason* to be so, than another, surely it was such a character as Mr D——.

He had been officiating one Sunday evening for an invalid friend, at the latter's church, a few miles distant from London, and was walking homewards, enjoying the tranquillity of the night, and enlivened by the cheerful beams of the full moon. When at about three miles' distance from town, he suddenly heard, or fancied he heard immediately behind him, the sound of gasping and panting, as of a dog following at his heels, breathless with running. He looked round, on both sides ; but seeing no dog, thought he must have been deceived, and resumed his walk and meditations. The sound was presently repeated. Again he looked round, but with no better success than before. After a little pause, thinking there was something rather odd about it, it suddenly struck him, that what he had heard was nothing more than the noise of his own hard breathing, occasioned by the insensibly accelerated pace at which he was walking, intent upon some subject which then particularly occupied his thoughts. He had not walked more than ten paces farther, when he again heard precisely similar sounds ; but with a running accompaniment—if I may be allowed a pun—of the pit-pit-pattering of a dog's feet, following close behind his left side.

“ God bless me !” exclaimed Mr D—— aloud, stopping for the third time, and looking around in all directions, far and near ; “ why really, that’s *very* odd—very ! —Surely I could not have been mistaken again ?” He continued standing still, wiped his forehead, replaced his hat on his head, and, with a little trepidation, resumed his walk, striking his stout black walking-stick on the ground with a certain energy and resoluteness, which sufficed in re-assuring his own flurried spirits. The next thirty or forty paces of his walk, Mr D—— passed over *erectis auribus*, and hearing nothing similar to the sounds which had thrice attracted his attention, was relapsing into his meditative mood, when, in a few moments, the noise was repeated, apparently from his right hand side ; and he gave something like a start from the path side into the road, on feeling the calf of his leg brushed past—as he described it—by the shaggy coat of his invisible attendant. He looked suddenly down, and, to his very great alarm and astonishment, beheld the dim outline of a large Newfoundland dog—of a *blue* colour ! He moved from the spot where he was standing—the phantom followed him—he rubbed his eyes with his hands, shook his head, and again looked ; but there it still was, large as a young calf, (to which he himself compared it,) and had assumed a more distinct and definite form. The colour, however, continued the same,—faint blue. He observed, too, its eyes—like dim-decaying fire-coals, as it looked composedly up in his face. He poked about his walking-stick, and moved it repeatedly through and through the form of the phantom ; but there it continued—indivisible—impalpable—in short, as much a dog as ever, and yet the stick traversing its form in every di-

rection, from the tail to the tip of the nose ! Mr D—— hurried on a few steps, and again looked,—there was the dog !—Now it is fit the reader should be informed, that Mr D—— was a remarkably temperate man, and had, that evening, contented himself with a solitary glass of port by the bedside of his sick brother ; so that there was no room for supposing his perceptions to have been disturbed with liquor.

“ What *can* it be ?” thought he, while his heart knocked rather harder than usual against the bars of its prison—Oh, it must be an *optical delusion*—oh, ’tis clearly so ! nothing in the world else ! that’s all. How odd !”—and he smiled, he thought very unconcernedly ; but another glimpse of the phantom standing by him in blue distinctness instantly darkened his features with the hue of apprehension. If it really *was* an optical delusion, it was the most fixed and pertinacious one he ever heard of ! The best part of valour is discretion, says Shakspeare,—and in all things ; so, observing a stage passing by at that moment, to put an end to the matter, Mr D——, with a little trepidation in his tone, ordered it to stop ; there was just room for *one* inside ; and in stepped Mr D——, chuckling at the cunning fashion after which he had succeeded in jockeying his strange attendant. Not feeling inclined to talk with the fat woman who sat next him, squeezing him most unmercifully against the side of the coach, nor with the elderly grazier-looking man fronting him, whose large dirty top-boots seriously incommoded him, he shut his eyes, that he might pursue his thoughts undisturbed. After about five minutes’ riding, he suddenly opened his eyes—and the first thing that met them was the figure of the blue dog, lying stretch-

ed, in some unaccountable manner, at his feet, half under the seat !

“ I—I—hope THE DOG does not annoy you, sir ?” inquired Mr D——, a little flustered, of the man opposite, hoping to discern whether the dog chose to be visible to any one else.

“ Sir !” exclaimed the person he addressed, starting from a kind of doze, and staring about in the bottom of the coach.

“ Lord, sir !” echoed the woman beside him.

“ A DOG, sir, did you say ?” inquired all in a breath.

“ Oh,—nothing—nothing, I assure you. ’Tis a little mistake,” replied Mr D——, with a faint smile ; “ I—I thought—in short, I find I’ve been *dreaming* ; and I’m sure I beg pardon for disturbing you.” Every one in the coach laughed except Mr D——, whose eyes continued rivetted on the dim blue outline of the dog, lying motionless at his feet. He was now certain that he was suffering from an optical illusion of some sort or other, and endeavoured to prevent his thoughts from running into an alarmed channel, by striving to engage his faculties with the *philosophy* of the thing. He could make nothing out, however ; and the Q.E.D. of his thinkings startled him not a little, when it came in the shape of the large blue dog, leaping at his heels out of the coach, when he alighted. Arrived at home, he lost sight of the phantom during the time of supper and the family devotions. As soon as he had extinguished his bed-room candle, and got into bed, he was nearly leaping out again, on feeling a sensation as if a large dog had jumped on that part of the bed where his feet lay. He *felt* its pressure ! He said he was inclined to rise, and make

it a subject of special prayer to the Deity ! Mrs D—— asked him what was the matter with him ? for he became very cold, and shivered a little. He easily quieted her with saying he felt a little chilled ; and, as soon as she was fairly asleep, he got quietly out of bed, and walked up and down the room. Wherever he moved, he beheld, by the moonlight through the window, the dim dusky outline of the dog, following wherever he went ! Mr D—— opened the windows, he did not exactly know why, and mounted the dressing-table for that purpose. On looking down before he leaped on the floor, there was the dog waiting for him, squatting composedly on his haunches ! There was no standing this any longer, thought Mr D——, delusion or no delusion ; so he ran to the bed—plunged beneath the clothes, and, thoroughly frightened, dropt at length asleep, his head under cover all night ! On waking in the morning, he thought it must have been all a dream about the dog, for it had totally disappeared with the daylight. When an hour's glancing in all directions had convinced him that the phantom was really no longer visible, he told the whole to Mrs D——, and made very merry with her fears—for she would have it, that it was “ something supernatural,” and, good lady ! “ Mr D—— might depend upon it, the thing *had its errand* ! ” Four times subsequent to this did Mr D—— see the spectral visitant—nowise altered either in its manner, form, or colour. It was always late in the evenings when he observed it, and generally when he was alone.—He was a man extensively acquainted with physiology ; but felt utterly at a loss to what derangement of what part of the animal economy to refer it. So, indeed, was I—for he

came to consult me about it. He was with me once during the presence of the phantom. I examined his eyes with a candle, to see whether the interrupted motions of the irides indicated any sudden alteration of the functions of the optic nerve ; but the pupils contracted and dilated with perfect regularity. One thing, however, was certain,—his stomach had been latterly a little out of order ; and every body knows the intimate connexion between its functions and the nervous system. But why he should see spectra—why they should assume and retain the figure of a dog, and of such an unequine colour too—and why it should so pertinaciously attach itself to him, and be seen precisely the same, at the various intervals after which it made its appearance—and why he should hear, or imagine he heard it utter sounds,—all these questions I am as unable to answer as Mr D—— was, or as, possibly, the reader will be. He may account for it in whatever way his ingenuity may enable him. I have seen and known other cases of spectra, not unlike the one above related ; and great alarm and horror have they excited in the breasts of persons blessed with less firmness and good sense than Mr D—— displayed.

A perusal of the foregoing narrative occasioned its corroboration, by the following account of a similar spectrum, seen by one of my scientific friends. As the reader will doubtless consider it interesting, I here subjoin the letter from my friend.

BLACKHEATH, *December* 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,—Though the “Spectral Dog” is somewhat laughable, in quality of tailpiece to the melancholy

—the truly sorrowful narrative immediately preceding it, I have read it with nearly equal interest, because it forcibly reminds me of a similar incident in my own life.

In my early days, I was, as you have often heard me say, an infatuated searcher after the philosopher's stone ! I then resided near Bristol ; and had a back parlour fitted up according to my fancy, in a very gloomy style. I soon filled it with the apparatus of my craft,—crucibles, furnace, retorts, &c. &c. &c. without end. I never allowed the light of day to dissipate the mysterious gloom which pervaded my laboratory ; but had an old Roman lamp, suspended from the ceiling, kept continually burning, night and day. I had *three* different locks on the door ; and took such precautions as enabled me to satisfy myself, that no one ever entered the room for nearly three years, except a singular and enthusiastic old man, who first inspired me with my madness, as I may well call it.—*You* know too well, my dear sir, how much of my little fortune was frittered away in running after that ridiculous Will o' the Wisp. But to my tale.

One Sunday evening, after dining hastily at five o'clock, I took my candle in my hand, and hurried back to my laboratory, which I had quitted only half an hour before, for dinner. On unlocking the door, and entering, to my equal alarm and astonishment, I distinctly saw the figure of a little old stooping woman, in a red cloak, and with a very pale face. She stood near the fire-place, and leaned with both hands on a walking-stick. I was nearly letting fall the candlestick I held. However, I contrived to set it down pretty steadily on the table, which stood between my mysterious guest and me, and *spoke* to her. I received no answer. The figure did not

move—nay, it did not even look at me. I stamped with my foot—I knocked my knuckles on the table—I shook it with both my hands—I called out to the old woman,—but in vain! A bottle of spirits—brandy, if I recollect right—and a wine glass, stood on a shelf of the cupboard, which was close at my elbow. I poured out a glassful, and drank it. Still the figure continued there, standing before me as distinct, as motionless as ever. I began to suspect it was merely an ocular spectrum. I rubbed my eyes, I pushed them inward with my fingers, till corruscations of light seemed to flash from them. But when I directed them again towards the spot where the apparition had stood, there it still was! I walked up to her somewhat falteringly. She stood exactly in the way of my arm-chair, as though she were on the point of sitting down upon it. I actually walked clean THROUGH the figure, and sat down. After a few moments, I opened my eyes, (which I had closed on sitting down,) and behold, the figure stood *fronting* me, about six feet off! I rose—it moved farther off; I lifted up my right arm in a threatening manner—so did the figure; I raised my other arm—so did the old woman; I moved towards her—she retreated, all the while never once looking at me. She got towards the spot where I had formerly stood; and so the table was once more between us. I got more agitated than ever; but, when the figure began to approach me in a direct line, walking apparently *right through the table*, even as the Israelites through the Red Sea, I quite lost my presence of mind. A giddiness, or sickness, came over me, and, sinking into my seat, I fainted. When I recovered, the spectre had disappeared.

I have never since seen it, nor any thing similar. Such

spectra are by no means rare among studious men, if of an irritable, nervous temperament, and an imaginative turn. I know a learned Baronet, who has his study sometimes crowded with them ; and he never feels so much at home, as when surrounded by these airy spirits !

You may make any use you like of this letter. I am,
my dear Sir, ever faithfully yours,

W. G.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FORGER.

A GROOM, in plain livery, left a card at my house, one afternoon, during my absence, on which was the name, "MR GLOUCESTER, No. —, REGENT STREET;" and in pencil, the words—"Will thank Dr—— to call this evening." As my red book was lying on the table at the time, I looked in it, from mere casual curiosity, to see whether the name of "Gloucester" appeared there—but it did not. I concluded, therefore, that my new patient must be a recent comer. About six o'clock that evening, I drove to Regent Street, sent in my card, and was presently ushered by the man-servant into a spacious apartment, somewhat showily furnished. The mild retiring sunlight of a July evening was diffused over the room; and ample crimson window-curtains, half drawn, mitigated the glare of the gilded picture-frames which hung in great numbers round the walls. There was a large round table in the middle of the room, covered with papers, magazines, books, cards, &c.; and, in a word, the whole aspect of things indicated the residence of a person of some fashion and fortune. On a side-table lay several pairs of box-

ing-gloves, foils, &c. The object of my visit, Mr Gloucester, was seated on an elegant ottoman, in a pensive posture, with his head leaning on his hand, which rested on the table. He was engaged with the newspaper when I was announced. He rose, as I entered, politely—I should rather say obsequiously—handed me to a chair, and then resumed his seat on the ottoman. His countenance was rather pleasing, fresh-coloured, with regular features, and very light auburn hair, which was adjusted with a sort of careless fashionable negligence. I may perhaps be laughed at by some for noticing such an apparently insignificant circumstance ; but the observant humour of my profession must sufficiently account for my detecting the fact, that his *hands* were not those of a *born and bred* gentleman—of one who, as the phrase is, “ has never *done any thing*” in his life ; but they were coarse, large, and clumsy looking. As for his demeanour also, there was a constrained and over-anxious display of politeness—an assumption of fashionable ease and indifference, that sat ill on him, like a court dress fastened on a vulgar fellow. He spoke with a would-be jaunty, free-and-easy, small swagger sort of air, and changed at times the tones of his voice to an offensive cringing softness, which, I daresay, he took to be vastly insinuating. All these little circumstances, put together, prepossessed me with a sudden feeling of dislike to the man. These sort of people are a great nuisance to one ; since there is no knowing exactly how to treat them. After some hurried expressions of civility, Mr Gloucester informed me that he had sent for me on account of a deep depression of spirits, to which he was latterly subject. He proceeded to detail many of the symptoms

of a disordered nervous system. He was tormented with vague apprehensions of impending calamity ; could not divest himself of an unaccountable trepidation of manner, which, by attracting observation, seriously disconcerted him on many occasions ; felt incessantly tempted to the commission of suicide ; loathed society ; disrelished his former scenes of amusement ; had lost his appetite ; passed restless nights ; and was disturbed with appalling dreams. His pulse, tongue, countenance, &c. corroborated the above statement of his symptoms. I asked him whether any thing unpleasant had occurred in his family ?—nothing of the kind. Disappointment in an *affaire du cœur* ?—Oh, no. Unsuccessful at play ?—By no means—he did not play. Well—had he *any* source of secret annoyance which could account for his present depression ? He coloured, seemed embarrassed, and apparently hesitating whether or not he should communicate to me what weighed on his spirits. He, however, seemed determined to keep me in ignorance ; and with some alteration of manner, said suddenly, that it was only a constitutional nervousness—his family were all so ; and he wished to know whether it was in the power of medicine to relieve him. I replied, that I would certainly do all that lay in my power, but that he must not expect any sudden and miraculous effect from the medicines I might prescribe ; that I saw clearly he had something on his mind which oppressed his spirits ; that he ought to go into cheerful society—he sighed ; seek change of air—that, he said, was, under circumstances, impossible. I rose to go. He gave me two guineas, and begged me to call the next evening. I left, not knowing what to make of him. To tell the plain truth,

I began to suspect that he was neither more nor less than a systematic London sharper—a gamester—a hanger-on about town—and that he had sent for me in consequence of some of those sudden alternations of fortune to which the lives of such men are subject. I was by no means anxious for a prolonged attendance on him.

About the same time next evening I paid him a second visit. He was stretched on the ottoman, enveloped in a gaudy dressing-gown, with his arms folded on his breast, and his right foot hanging over the side of the ottoman, and dangling about, as if in search of a stray slipper. I did not like this elaborately careless and conceited posture. A decanter or two, with some wine glasses, stood on the table. He did not rise on my entering, but, with a languid air, begged me to be seated in a chair opposite to him. “Good evening, Doctor—good evening,” said he, in a low and hurried tone; “I’m glad you are come, for if you had not, I’m sure I don’t know what I should have done. I’m deucedly low to-night.”

“Have you taken the medicines I prescribed, Mr Gloucester?” I inquired, feeling his pulse, which fluttered irregularly, indicating a high degree of nervous excitement. He had taken most of the physic I had ordered, he said, but without perceiving any effect from it. “In fact, Doctor,” he continued, starting from his recumbent position to his feet, and walking rapidly three or four paces to and fro—“d—n me if I know what’s come to me. I feel as if I could cut my throat.” I insinuated some questions, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there was any hereditary tendency to *insanity* in his family; but it would not do. “He saw,” he said, “what I was *driving at*,” but I was “on a wrong scent.”

“ Come, come, Doctor ! after all there’s nothing like *wine* for low spirits, is there ? D——e, Doctor, drink, drink. Only taste that claret ;”—and, after pouring out a glass for me, which ran over the brim on the table—his hand was so unsteady—he instantly gulped down two glasses himself. There was a vulgar offensive familiarity in his manner, from which I felt inclined to stand off ; but I thought it better to conceal my feelings. I was removing my glove from my right hand, and putting my hat and stick on the table, when, seeing a thin slip of paper lying on the spot where I intended to place them—apparently a bill or promissory-note—I was going to hand it over to Mr Gloucester ; but, to my astonishment, he suddenly sprang towards me, snatched from me the paper, with an air of ill-disguised alarm, and crumpled it up into his pocket, saying hurriedly—“ Ha, ha, Doctor !—this same little bit of paper—didn’t see the *name*, eh ? ’Tis the bill of an extravagant young friend of mine, whom I’ve just come down a cool hundred or two for ; and it wouldn’t be the handsome thing to let his name appear—ha—you understand ?” He stammered confusedly, directing to me as anxious, sudden, and penetrating a glance as I ever encountered. I felt excessively uneasy, and inclined to take my departure instantly. My suspicions were now confirmed—I was sitting familiarly with a swindler—a gambler—and the bill he was so anxious to conceal, was evidently wrung from one of his ruined dupes. My demeanour was instantly frozen over with the most distant and frigid civility. I begged him to be reseated, and allow me to put a very few more questions to him, as I was in great haste.’ I was thus engaged, when a heavy knock was heard at the outer

door. Though there was nothing particular in it, Mr Gloucester started, and turned pale. In a few moments I heard the sound of altercation—the door of the room in which we sat was presently opened, and two men entered. Recollecting suddenly a similar scene in my own early history, I felt faint. There was no mistaking the character or errand of the two fellows, who now walked up to where we were sitting: they were two sullen Newgate myrmidons, and—gracious God!—had a warrant to arrest Mr Gloucester for FORGERY! I rose from my chair, and staggered a few paces, I knew not whither. I could scarcely preserve myself from falling on the floor. Mr Gloucester, as soon as he caught sight of the officers, fell back on the ottoman—suddenly pressed his hand to his heart—turned pale as death, and gasped, breathless with horror.

“Gentlemen—what—what—do you want here?”

“Isn’t your name E—— T——?” asked the elder of the two, coolly and unconcernedly.

“N—o—my name is Glou—ces—ter,” stammered the wretched young man, almost inaudibly.

“*Gloucester*, eh?—oh, ho!—none of that there sort of blarney! Come, my kiddy—caged at last, eh? We’ve been long arter you, and now you must be off with us directly. Here’s your passport,” said one of the officers, pointing to the warrant. The young man uttered a deep groan, and sank senseless on the sofa. One of the officers, I cannot conceive how, was acquainted with my person; and, taking off his hat, said, in a respectful tone,—“Doctor, you’ll bring him to his wits again, an’t please you—We *must* have him off directly!” Though myself but a trifle removed from the state in which he lay

stretched before me, I did what I could to restore him, and succeeded at length. I unbuttoned his shirt-collar, dashed in his face some water brought by his man-servant, who now stood looking on shivering with affright—and endeavoured to calm his agitation by such soothing expressions as I could command.

“ Oh, Doctor, Doctor ! what a horrid dream it was !—Are they gone ?—are they ?” he inquired, without opening his eyes, and clasping my hand in his, which was cold as that of a corpse.

“ Come, come—none of these here tantrums—you must *off* at once—that’s the long and short of it,” said an officer, approaching, and taking from his coat-pocket a pair of handcuffs, at sight of which, and of a large horse-pistol projecting from his breast-pocket, my very soul sickened.

“ Oh, Doctor, Doctor !—save me ! save me !” groaned their prisoner, clasping my hands with convulsive energy.

“ Come—curse your cowardly snivelling !—Why can’t you behave like a man, now, eh ?—Come !—Off with this peacock’s covering of yours—it was never made for the like of *you*, I’m sure—and put on a plain coat, and off to cage like a sensible bird,” said one of the two, proceeding to remove the dressing-gown very roughly.

“ Oh ! my God—oh ! my God—have mercy on me !—Oh, strike me dead at once !” nearly shrieked their prisoner, falling on his knees on the floor, and glaring towards the ceiling with an almost maniac eye.

“ I hope you’ll not treat your prisoner with unnecessary severity,” said I, seeing them disposed to be very unceremonious.

“ No—not by no manner of means, if as how he be-

haves himself," replied one of the men, respectfully. Mr Gloucester's dressing-gown was quickly removed, and his body-coat—himself perfectly passive the while—drawn on by his bewildered servant, assisted by one of the officers. It was nearly a new coat, cut in the very extreme of the latest fashion, and contrasted strangely with the disordered and affrighted air of its wearer. His servant placed his hat on his head, and endeavoured to draw on his gloves—showy sky-coloured kid. He was standing with a stupified air, gazing vacantly at the officers, when he started suddenly to the window, manifestly with the intention of leaping out.

"Ha, ha! *that's* your game, my lad, is it?" coolly exclaimed one of the officers, as he snatched him back again with a vice-like grasp of the collar. "Now, since *that's* the sport you're for, why, you must be content to wear these little bracelets for the rest of your journey. It's your own seeking, my lad; for I didn't mean to have used them, if as how you'd only behaved peaceably;" and in an instant the young man's hands were locked together in the handcuffs. It was sickening to see the frantic efforts—as if he would have severed his hands from the wrists—he made to burst the handcuffs.

"Take me—to *Hell*, if you choose!" he gasped, in a hoarse, hollow tone, sinking into a chair, utterly exhausted, while one of the officers was busily engaged rummaging the drawers, desks, &c. in search of papers. When he had concluded his search, filled his pockets, and buttoned his coat, the two approached, and told him to rise and accompany them.

"Now, covey! are you for a rough or a quiet passage, eh?" said one of them, seizing him not very gently by

the collar. He received no answer. The wretched prisoner was more dead than alive.

“ I hope you have a hackney-coach in waiting, and don’t intend to drag the young man through the streets on foot ?” I inquired.

“ Why, true, true, Doctor—it might be as well for us all ; but who’s to *stump up* for it ?” * replied one of the officers. I gave him five shillings, and the servant was instantly despatched for a hackney-coach. While they were waiting its arrival, conceiving I could not be of any use to Mr Gloucester, and not choosing to be seen leaving the house with two police-officers and a handcuffed prisoner, I took my departure, and drove home in such a state of agitation as I have never experienced before or since. The papers of the next morning explained all. The young man “ living in Regent Street, in first-rate style,” who had summoned me to visit him, had committed a series of forgeries, for the last eighteen months, to a great amount, and with so much secrecy and dexterity, as to have, till then, escaped detection ; and had for the last few months, been enjoying the produce of his skilful villany in the style I witnessed, passing himself off, in the circles where he associated, under the assumed name of *Gloucester*. The immediate cause of his arrest was forging the acceptance of an eminent mercantile house to a bill of exchange for £45. Poor fellow ! it was short work with him afterwards. He was arraigned at the next September sessions of the Old Bailey—the case clearly proved against him—he offered no defence—was found

* “ ‘ Oui, c’est très bien,’ repondit le recors ; mais qui *bouchera le trou ?* ’ ” says the French Translator ; and adds in a note,—“ Ang. *to stump up*,—Terme d’Argot ?” (The forger is called *Edward Werney!*)

guilty, and sentenced to death. Shortly after this, while reading the papers one Saturday morning, at breakfast, my eye lit on the usual gloomy annunciation of the Recorder's visit to Windsor, and report to the King in Council of the prisoners found guilty at the last Old Bailey Sessions—"all of whom," the paragraph concluded, "his Majesty was graciously pleased to respite during his royal pleasure, except E—— T——, on whom the law is left to take its course, next Tuesday morning."

Transient and any thing but agreeable as had been my intimacy with this miserable young man, I could not read this intelligence with indifference. He whom I had so very lately seen surrounded with the life-bought luxuries of a man of wealth and fashion, was now shivering the few remaining hours of his life in the condemned cells of Newgate! The next day (Sunday) I entertained a party of friends at my house to dinner; to which I was just sitting down when one of the servants put a note into my hand, of which the following is a copy:—

"The Chaplain of Newgate has been earnestly requested by E—— T——, (the young man sentenced to suffer for forgery next Tuesday morning,) to present his humble respects to Dr ——, and solicit the favour of a visit from him in the course of to-morrow (Monday.) The unhappy convict, Mr —— believes, has something on his mind, which he is anxious to communicate to Dr ——.

"Newgate, September 28. 182—."

I felt it impossible, after perusing this note, to enjoy the company I had invited. What on earth could the culprit have to say to me?—what unreasonable request might he put me to the pain of refusing?—ought I to see

him at all?—were questions which I incessantly proposed to myself during the evening, but felt unable to answer. I resolved, however, at last, to afford him the desired interview, and be at the cell of Newgate in the course of the next evening, unless my professional engagements prevented me. About six o'clock, therefore, on Monday, after fortifying myself with a few extra glasses of wine—for why should I hesitate to acknowledge, that I apprehended much distress and agitation from witnessing so unusual a scene?—I drove to the Old Bailey, drew up opposite the Governor's house, and was received by him very politely. He despatched a turnkey to lead me to the cell where my late patient the *soi-disant* Mr Gloucester was immured in chilling expectancy of his fate.

Surely Horror has appropriated those gloomy regions for her peculiar dwelling-place! Who that has passed through them once, can ever forget the long, narrow, lamp-lit passages—the sepulchral silence, save where the ear is startled with the clangour of iron doors closing harshly before and behind—the dimly seen spectral figure of the prison patrol gliding along with loaded blunderbuss—and the chilling consciousness of being surrounded by so many fiends in human shape—inhalings the foul atmosphere of all the concentrated misery and guilt of the metropolis! My heart leaped within me to listen even to my own echoing footfalls: and I felt several times inclined to return without fulfilling the purpose of my visit. My vacillation, however, was abruptly put an end to by my guide exclaiming, “Here we are, sir.” While he was unbarring the cell door, I begged him to

continue at the outside of the door during the few moments of my interview with the convict.

“Holloa! young man!—Within there!—Here’s Dr ——— come to see you!” said the turnkey, hoarsely, as he ushered me in. The cell was small and gloomy; and a little lamp, lying on the table, barely sufficed to show me the persons of the culprit, and an elderly, respectable looking man, muffled in a drab great-coat, and sitting gazing in stupified silence on the prisoner. Great God, it was his FATHER! He did not seem conscious of my entrance; but his son rose, and feebly asked me how I was, muttered a few words of thanks, sank again—apparently overpowered by his feelings—into his seat, and fixed his eyes on a page of the Bible, which was lying open before him. A long silence ensued; for none of us seemed either able or inclined to talk. I contemplated the two with feelings of lively interest. How altered was the young culprit before me, from the gay “Mr Gloucester,” whom I had visited in Regent Street! His face had now a ghastly, cadaverous hue; his hair was matted, with perspiration, over his sallow forehead; his eyes were sunk and bloodshot, and seemed incapable of distinguishing the print to which they were directed. He was dressed in a plain suit of mourning, and wore a simple black stock round his neck. How I shuddered, when I thought on the rude hands which were soon to unloose it! Beside him, on the table, lay a white pocket-handkerchief, completely saturated, either with tears, or wiping the perspiration from his forehead, and a glass of water, with which he occasionally moistened his parched lips. I knew not whether he was more to be pitied than his wretched, heart-broken father. The latter seemed a

worthy, respectable person, (he was an industrious tradesman in the country,) with a few thin gray hairs scattered over his otherwise bald head, and sat with his hands closed together, resting on his knees, gazing on his doomed son with a lack-lustre eye, which, together with his anguish-worn features, told eloquently of his sufferings !

“ Well, Doctor !” exclaimed the young man, at length, closing the Bible, “ I have now read that blessed chapter to the end ; and, I thank God, I think I *feel* it.— But now, let me thank you, Doctor, for your good and kind attention to my request. I have something particular to say to you, but it must be in private,” he continued, looking significantly at his father, as though he wished him to take the hint, and withdraw for a few moments. Alas ! the heart-broken parent understood him not, but continued with his eyes rivetted, vacantly, as before.

“ We *must* be left alone for a moment,” said the young man, rising and stepping to the door. He knocked, and when it was opened, whispered the turnkey to remove his father gently, and let him wait outside for an instant or two. The man entered for that purpose, and the prisoner took hold tenderly of his father’s hand, and said, “ Dear—dear father !—you must leave me for a moment, while I speak in private to this gentleman ;” at the same time endeavouring to raise him from the chair.

“ Oh ! yes—yes—What ?—Of course,” stammered the old man, with a bewildered air, rising ; and then, as it were with a sudden gush of full returning consciousness, flung his arms round his son, folded him convulsively to his breast, and groaned—“ Oh, my son, my poor son !”

Even the iron visage of the turnkey seemed darkened with a transient emotion, at this heart-breaking scene. The next moment we were left alone ; but it was some time before the culprit recovered from the agitation occasioned by the sudden ebullition of his father's feelings.

" Doctor," he gasped at length, " we've but a few—very few moments, and I have much to say. God Almighty bless you," squeezing my hands convulsively, " for this kindness to a guilty, unworthy wretch like me ; and the business I wanted to see you about is sad, but short. I have heard so much of your goodness, Doctor, that I'm sure you won't deny me the only favour I shall ask."

" Whatever is reasonable and proper, if it lie in my way, I shall certainly"—said I, anxiously waiting to see the nature of the communication he seemed to have to make to me.

" Thank you, Doctor ; thank you. It is only this—in a word—guilty wretch that I am!—I have"—he trembled violently—" seduced a lovely, but poor girl !—God forgive me !—And—and—she is now—nearly on the verge of her *confinement* !" He suddenly covered his face with his handkerchief, and sobbed bitterly for some moments. Presently he resumed—" Alas ! she knows me not by my real name ; so that, when she reads the account of—of—my execution in the papers of Wednesday—she won't know it is *her* Edward ! Nor does she know me by the name I bore in Regent Street. She is not at all acquainted with my frightful situation ; but she *must* be, when all is over ! Now, dear kind, good Doctor," he continued, shaking from head to foot, and grasping my hand, " do, for the love of God, and the peace

of my dying moments, promise me that you will see her, (she lives at ——;) visit her in her confinement, and gradually break the news of my death to her; and say my last prayers will be for her, and that my Maker may forgive me for her ruin! You will find in this little bag a sum of £30,—the last I have on earth. I beg you will take five guineas for your own fee, and give the rest to my precious—my ruined Mary!” He fell down on his knees, and folded his arms round mine, in a supplicating attitude. My tears fell on him, as he looked up at me. “Oh, God be thanked for these blessed tears!—they assure me you will do what I ask—may I believe you will?”

“Yes—yes—yes, young man,” I replied, with a quivering lip; “it is a painful task; but I will do it—give her the money, and add ten pounds to the thirty, should it be necessary.”—“Oh, Doctor, depend on it, God will bless you and yours for ever, for this noble conduct!—And now, I have *one* thing more to ask—yes—one thing”—he seemed choked—“Doctor, your skill will enable you to inform me—I wished to know—is—the death I must die to-morrow”—he put his hand to his neck, and shaking like an aspen leaf, sank down again into the chair from which he had risen—“is hanging—a painful—a tedious”—— He could utter no more, nor could I answer him.

“Do not,” I replied, after a pause, “do not put me to the torture of listening to questions like these. Pray to your merciful God; and, rely on it, no one ever prayed sincerely in vain. The thief on the cross”—I faltered; then feeling, that if I continued in the cell a moment longer, I should faint, I rose, and shook the young man’s

cold hands ; he could not speak, but sobbed and gasped convulsively—and in a few moments I was driving home. As soon as I was seated in my carriage, I could restrain my feelings no longer, but burst into a flood of tears. I prayed to God I might never be called to pass through such a bitter and afflicting scene again, to the latest hour I breathed ! I ought to have visited several patients that evening, but finding myself utterly unfit, I sent apologies and went home. My sleep in the night was troubled ; the distorted image of the convict I had been visiting flitted in horrible shapes round my bed all night long. An irresistible and most morbid restlessness and curiosity took possession of me, to witness the end of this young man. The first time the idea presented itself, it sickened me ; I revolted from it. How my feelings changed, I know not ; but I rose at seven o'clock, and, without hinting it to any one, put on a great-coat, slouched my hat over my eyes, and directed my hurried steps towards the Old Bailey. I got into one of the houses immediately opposite the gloomy gallows, and took my station, with several other visitors, at the window. They were conversing on the subject of the execution, and unanimously execrated the sanguinary severity of the laws which could deprive a young man, such as they said E—— T—— was, of his life, for an offence of merely civil criminality. Of course, I did not speak. It was a wretched morning ; a drizzling shower fell incessantly. The crowd was not great, but conducted themselves most indecorously. Even the female portion—by far the greater—occasionally vociferated joyously and boisterously, as they recognised their acquaintance among the crowd. At length, St Sepulchre's bell tolled the hour

of eight—gloomy herald of many a sinner's entrance into eternity ; and as the last chimes died away on the ear and were succeeded by the muffled tolling of the prison bell, which I could hear with agonizing distinctness, I caught a glimpse of the glistening gold-tipped wands of the two under sheriffs, as they took their station under the shed at the foot of the gallows. In a few moments, the Ordinary, and another grey-haired gentleman, made their appearance ; and between them was the unfortunate criminal. He ascended the steps with considerable firmness. His arms were pinioned before and behind ; and when he stood on the gallows, I could hear the exclamations of the crowd—" Lord, Lord ! what a fine young man ! Poor fellow !" He was dressed in a suit of respectable mourning, and wore black kid gloves. His light hair had evidently been adjusted with some care, and fell in loose curls over each side of his temples. His countenance was much as I saw it on the preceding evening—fearfully pale ; and his demeanour was much more composed than I had expected, from what I had witnessed of his agitation in the condemned cell. He bowed twice very low, and rather formally, to the crowd around—gave a sudden and ghastly glance at the beam over his head, from which the rope was suspended, and then suffered the executioner to place him on the precise spot which he was to occupy, and prepare him for death. I was shocked at the air of sullen, brutal indifference, with which the hangman loosed and removed his neckerchief, which was white, and tied with neatness and precision—dropped the accursed noose over his head, and adjusted it round the bare—the creeping neck—and could stand it no longer. I staggered from my place at the window

to a distant part of the room, dropped into a chair, shut my eyes, closed my tingling ears with my fingers, and, with a hurried aspiration for God's mercy towards the wretched young criminal, who, within a very few yards of me, was perhaps, that instant surrendering his life into the hands which gave it, continued motionless for some minutes, till the noise made by the persons at the window, in leaving, convinced me all was over. I rose and followed them down stairs ; worked my way through the crowd, without daring to elevate my eyes, lest they should encounter the suspended corpse ; threw myself into a coach, and hurried home. I did not recover the agitation produced by this scene for several days.—This was the end of a FORGER !

In conclusion, I may just inform the reader, that I faithfully executed the commission with which he had intrusted me, and a bitter, heart-rending business it was !

CHAPTER XII.

A MAN ABOUT TOWN.

[THE *London Medical Gazette* having, in somewhat uncourtly terms, preferred an accusation of plagiarism against the original writer of this Diary—with reference to the citation (in the case “Intriguing and Madness”) of the passage from Shakspeare, affirming memory to be the test of madness, (“Bring me to the test,” &c.)—asserting, in downright terms, that the illustration in question was “borrowed without scruple or acknowledgment, from Sir Henry Halford,”—and was “truly a little too barefaced;”—the Editor of these Passages simply assures the reader, that, from circumstances, this is *impossible*; and the reader would know it to be so, could these circumstances be communicated consistently with the Editor’s present purposes. And farther, the Editor immediately wrote to Sir Henry Halford, disproving the truth of the assertion in the *Medical Gazette*, and has received a note from Sir Henry, stating his “perfect satisfaction” with the explanation given. The other allegations contained in the article in question, are not such as to require an answer.

I HATE humbug, and would eschew that cant and fanaticism which are at present tainting extensive portions of society, as sincerely as I venerate and wish to cultivate a spirit of sober, manly, and rational piety. It is not, therefore, to pander to the morbid tastes of overweening saintliness, to encourage its arrogant assumptions, sanction its hateful, selfish exclusiveness, or advocate that spirit of sour, diseased, puritanical seclusion from the innocent gaieties and enjoyments of life, which has more deeply injured the interests of religion than any of its professed enemies ; it is not, I repeat, with any such unworthy objects as these that this melancholy narrative is placed on record. But it is to show, if it ever meet their eyes, your “ men about town,” as the *élite* of the rakish fools and flutterers of the day are significantly termed, that some portions of the page of profligacy are black—black with horror, and steeped in the tears—the blood, of anguish and remorse, wrung from ruined thousands !—That often the “ iron is entering the very soul” of those who present to the world’s eye an exterior of glaring gaiety and recklessness—that gilded guilt *must*, one day, be stripped of its tinselry, and flung into the haze and gloom of outer darkness : *these* are the only objects for which this black passage is laid before the reader ; in which I have undertaken to describe pains and agonies, which these eyes witnessed, and that with all the true frightfulness of reality. It has, indeed, cost me feelings of little less than torture to retrace the leading features of the scenes with which the narrative concludes.

“ Hit him—pitch it into him ! Go it, boys—go it ! Right into your man, each of you, like good ’uns !—Top sawyers these !—Hurra ! Tap his claret cask—draw his cork !—Go it—go it—beat him, big one !—lick him, little one ! Hurra—Slash, smash—fib away—right and left !—Hollo !—Clear the way there !—Ring ! ring !”

These, and many similar exclamations, may serve to bring before the reader one of those ordinary scenes in London—a street row ; arising, too, out of circumstances of equally frequent recurrence. A gentleman (!) prowling about Piccadilly, towards nightfall, in the month of November, in quest of adventures of a certain description, had been offering some impertinence to a female of respectable appearance, whom he had been following for some minutes. He was in the act of putting his arm round her waist, or taking some similar liberty, when he was suddenly seized by the collar from behind, and jerked off the pavement so violently, that he fell nearly at full length in the gutter. This feat was performed by the woman’s husband, who had that moment rejoined her, having quitted her only a very short time before, to leave a message at one of the coach-offices, while she walked on, being in haste. No man of ordinary spirit could endure such rough handling tamely. The instant, therefore, that the prostrate man had recovered his footing, he sprung towards his assailant, and struck him furiously over the face with his umbrella. For a moment the man seemed disinclined to return the blow, owing to the passionate dissuasions of his wife ; but it was useless—his English blood began to boil under the idea of submitting to a blow, and, hurriedly exclaiming, “ Wait a moment, sir,”—he pushed his wife into the shop ad-

joining, telling her to stay till he returned. A small crowd stood round. "Now, by ——, sir, we shall see which is the better man!" said he, again making his appearance, and putting himself into a boxing attitude. There was much disparity between the destined combatants, in point both of skill and size. The man last named was short in stature, but of a square iron build; and it needed only a glance at his posture to see he was a scientific, perhaps a thoroughbred, bruiser. His antagonist, on the contrary, was a tall, handsome, well-proportioned, gentlemanly man, apparently not more than twenty-eight or thirty years old. Giving his umbrella into the hands of a bystander, and hurriedly drawing off his gloves, he addressed himself to the encounter with an unguarded impetuosity, which left him wholly at the mercy of his cool and practised opponent.

The latter seemed evidently inclined to play a while with his man, and contented himself with stopping several heavily dealt blows, with so much quickness and precision, that every one saw "the big one *had caught a Tartar*" in the man he had provoked. Watching his opportunity, like a tiger crouching noiselessly in preparation for the fatal spring, the short man delivered such a slaughtering left-handed hit full in the face of his tall adversary, accompanied by a tremendous "doubling-up" body-blow, as in an instant brought him senseless to the ground. He who now lay stunned and blood-smeared on the pavement, surrounded by a rabble jeering the fallen "swell," and exulting at seeing the punishment he had received for his impertinence, was, as the conqueror pithily told them, standing over his prostrate foe, the Honourable St John Henry Effingstone, presump-

tive heir to a marquissate ; and the victor, who walked coolly away as if nothing had happened, was Tom ——, the prizefighter.

Such was the occasion of my first introduction to Mr Effingstone ; for I was driving by at the time this occurrence took place ; and my coachman, seeing the crowd, slackened the pace of his horses, and I desired him to stop. Hearing some voices cry, “ Take him to a doctor,” I let myself out, announced my profession, and, seeing a man of very gentlemanly and superior appearance, covered with blood, and propped against the knee of one of the people round, I had him brought into my carriage, saying I would drive him to his residence close by, which his card showed me was in —— Street. Though much disfigured, and in great pain, he had not received any injury likely to be attended with danger. He soon recovered ; but an infinitely greater annoyance remained after all the other symptoms had disappeared—his left eye was sent into deep mourning, which threatened to last for some weeks ; and could any thing be more vexatious to a gay man about town ? for such was Mr Effingstone—but no ordinary one.

He did not belong to that crowded class of essenced fops, of silly coxcombs, hung in gold chains, and bespangled with a profusion of rings, brooches, pins, and quizzing-glasses, who are to be seen in fine weather glistening about town, like fire-flies in India. *He* was no walking advertisement of the superior articles of his tailor, mercer, and jeweller. No—Mr Effingstone was really a *man about town*, and yet no puppy. He was worse—an abandoned profligate, a systematic debauchee, an irreclaimable reprobate. He stood pre-eminent amidst

the throng of men of fashion—a glaring tower of guilt, such as Milton represents Satan,

In shape and gesture proudly eminent,

among his gloomy battalions of fallen spirits. He had nothing in common with the set of men I have been alluding to, but that he chose to drink deeper from the same foul and maddening cup of dissipation. Their minor fooleries and “naughtiness,” as he termed them, he despised. Had he not neglected a legitimate exercise of his transcendent talents, he might have become, with little effort, one of the first men of his age. As for knowledge, his powers of acquisition seemed unbounded. Whatever he read he made his own; good or bad, he never forgot it. He was equally intimate with ancient and modern scholarship. His knowledge of the varieties and distinctions between the ancient sects of philosophers was more minutely accurate, and more successfully brought to bear upon the modern, than I am aware of having ever known in another. Few, very few, that I have been acquainted with, could make a more imposing and effective display of the “dazzling fence of logic.” Fallacies, though never so subtle, so exquisitely *vraisemblant*—so “twin-formed to truth”—and calculated to evade the very ghost of Aristotle himself, melted away instantaneously before the first glance of his eye. His powers were acknowledged and feared by all who knew him—as many a discomfited sciolist now living can bear testimony. His acuteness of perception was not less remarkable. He anticipated all you meant to convey, before you had uttered more than a word or two. It was useless to kick or wince under such treat-

ment—to find your own words thrust back again down your own throat as useless, than which few things are more provoking to men with the slightest spice of petulance. A conviction of his overwhelming power kept you passive beneath his grasp. He had, as it were, extracted and devoured the kernel, while you were attempting to decide on the best method of breaking the shell. His wit was radiant, and, fed by a fancy both lively and powerful, it flashed and sparkled on all sides of you like lightning. He had a strong bent towards sarcasm, and that of the bitterest and fiercest kind. If you chanced unexpectedly to become its subject, you sneaked away consciously seared to your very centre. If, however, you really wished to acquire information from him, no one was readier to open the storehouses of his learning. You had but to start a topic requiring elucidation of any kind, and presently you saw, grouped around it, numerous, appropriate, and beautiful illustrations, from almost every region of knowledge. But then you could scarcely fail to observe the spirit of pride and ostentation which pervaded the whole. If he failed anywhere—and who living is equally excellent in all things?—it was in physics. Yes, here he *was* foiled. He lacked the patience, perseverance, and almost exclusive attention, which the cold and haughty goddess presiding over them invariably exacts from her suitors. Still, however, he had that showy general intimacy with its outlines, and some of its leading features, which earned him greater applause than was doled out reluctantly and suspiciously to the profoundest masters of science.

Yet Mr Effingstone, though such as I have described him, gained no distinctions at Oxford ; and why ? be-

cause he knew that all acknowledged his intellectual supremacy ; that he had but to extend his foot, and stand on the proudest pedestal of academical eminence. This satisfied him. And another reason for his conduct once slipped out in the course of my intimacy with him : His overweening, I may say, almost unparalleled pride, could not brook the idea of the remotest chance of *failure* ! The same thing accounted for another manifestation of his peculiar character : No one could conceive how, when, or where, he came by his wonderful knowledge. He never *seemed* to be doing any thing ; no one ever *saw* him reading or writing, and yet he came into society *au fait* at almost every thing ! All this was attributable to his pride, or, I should say more correctly, his vanity. “ *Results*, not processes, are for the public eye,” he was fond of saying. In plain English, he would shine before men, but would not that they should know the pains and expense with which his lamp was fed. And this highly gifted individual it was who chose to track the waters of dissipation, to career among their sunk rocks, shoals, and quicksands, even till he sank and perished in them ! By some strange omission in his moral conformation, his soul seemed utterly destitute of any sympathies for virtue ; and whenever I looked at him, it was with feelings of concern, alarm, and wonder, akin to those with which one might contemplate the frightful creature brought into being by Frankenstein. Mr Effingstone seemed either wholly incapable of appreciating moral excellence, or wilfully contemptuous of it. While reflecting carefully on his ἰδιοσυγκρίσια, which several years’ intimacy gave me many opportunities of doing, and endeavouring to account for his fixed inclination towards vice, and

that in its most revolting form, and most frantic excesses, at a time when he was consciously possessed of such capabilities of excellence of every description,—it has struck me that a little incident, which came to my knowledge casually, afforded a clew to the whole—a key to his character. He one day chanced to overhear a distinguished friend of his father's lamenting that a man “of Mr St John's vast powers” could prostitute them in the manner he did; and the reply made by his father was, with a sigh, that “St John was a *splendid* sinner, and he knew it.” From that hour, the key-stone was fixed in the arch of his unalterable, irreclaimable depravity. He felt a satanic satisfaction in the consciousness of being an object of regret and wonder among those who most enthusiastically acknowledged his intellectual supremacy. How infinitely less stimulating to his morbid sensibilities would be the placid approvals of virtue—a commonplace acquiescence in the ordinary notions of virtue and religion! He wished rather to stand out from the multitude—to be severed from the herd. “Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven,” he thought; and he was not long in sinking many fathoms lower into the abyss of atheism. In fact, he never pretended to the possession of religious principle; he had acquiesced in the reputed truths of Christianity like his neighbours; or, at least, kept doubts to himself, till he fancied his reputation required him to join the crew of fools, who blazon their unbelief. *This was “damned fine.”*

Conceive, now, such a man as I have truly, but perhaps imperfectly, described Mr Effingstone—in the possession of £3000 a-year—perfectly his own master—with a fine person and most fascinating manners—capa-

ble of acquiring with ease every fashionable accomplishment—the idol, the dictator of all he met—and with a dazzling circle of friends and relatives ;—conceive, for a moment, such a man as this *let loose upon town* ! Will it occasion wonder, if the reader is told how soon nocturnal studies, and the ambition of retaining his intellectual character which prompted them, were supplanted by a blind, absorbing, reckless devotion—for he was incapable of any thing but *in extremes*—to the gaming-table—the turf, the cockpit, the ring, the theatres, and daily and nightly attendance on those haunts of detestable debauchery, which I cannot foul my pen with naming ?—that a two or three years' intimacy with such scenes as these, had conduced, in the first instance, to shed a haze of indistinctness over the multifarious acquirements of his earlier and better days, and finally to blot out large portions with blank oblivion ?—that his soul's sun shone in dim discoloured rays through the fogs—the vault-vapours of profligacy ?—that prolonged desuetude was gradually, though unheededly, benumbing and palsyng his intellectual faculties ?—that a constant “feeding on garbage” had vitiated and depraved his whole system, both physical and mental ?—and that, to conclude, there was a lamentable, an almost incredible, contrast between the glorious being, Mr Effingstone, at twenty-one, and that poor faded creature, that prematurely superannuated debauchee, Mr Effingstone, at twenty-seven ?

I feel persuaded I shall not be accused of travelling out of the legitimate sphere of these “Passages,”—of forsaking the track of professional detail,—in having thus attempted to give the reader some faint idea of the intellectual character of one of the most extraordinary young

men, that have ever flashed, meteor-like, across the sphere of my own observation. Not that, in the ensuing pages, it will be in my power to exhibit him such as he has been described, doing and uttering things worthy of his great powers. Alas, alas ! he was “fallen, fallen, fallen” from that altitude long before it became my province to know him professionally. His decline and fall are alone what remain for me to describe. I am painting from the life, and those are living who know it,—that I am describing the character and career of him who once lived, but who deliberately immolated himself before the shrine of debauchery,—and they can, with a quaking heart, attest the truth of the few bitter and black passages of his remaining history, which here follow.

The reader is acquainted with the circumstances attending my first professional acquaintance with Mr Effingstone. Those of the second are in perfect keeping. He had been prosecuting an enterprise of *seduction*, the interest of which was, in his eyes, enhanced a thousand-fold, on discovering that the object of his illicit attentions was married. She was, I understood, a very handsome, fashionable woman ; and she fell—for Mr Effingstone was irresistible ! He was attending one of their assignations one night, which she was unexpectedly unable to keep ; and he waited so long at the place of meeting, but slightly clad, in the cold and inclement weather, that when he returned home at an early hour in the morning, intensely chagrined, he began to feel ill. He could not rise to breakfast. He grew rapidly worse ; and when I was summoned to his bedside, he exhibited all the symptoms of a very severe inflammation of the lungs. One or two concurrent causes of excitement and chagrin aggra-

vated his illness. He had been very unfortunate in betting on the Derby ; and was threatened with an arrest from his tailor, whom he owed some hundreds of pounds, which he could not possibly pay. Again,—a wealthy remote member of the family, his godfather, having heard of his profligacy, altered his will, and left every farthing he had in the world, amounting to upwards of fifty or sixty thousand pounds, to a charitable institution, the whole of which had been originally destined to Mr Effingstone. The only notice taken of him in the old gentleman's will was, " To St John Henry Effingstone, my unworthy godson, I bequeath the sum of five pounds sterling, to purchase a Bible and Prayer-book, believing the time may yet come when he will require them."—These circumstances, I say, added to one or two other irritating concomitants, such as will sometimes succeed in stinging even your *men about town* into something like reflection, brief, bitter, and futile though it be, contributed to accelerate the inroads of his dangerous disorder. We were compelled to adopt such powerful antiphlogistic treatment as reduced him to within an inch of his life. Previous to, and in the course of, this illness, he exhibited one or two characteristic traits.

" Doctor—is delirium usually an attendant on this disorder ?" he inquired one morning. I told him it was—very frequently.

" Ah ! then, I'd better become *ἀγλωστος*, with one of old, and bite out my tongue ; for, God knows ! my life won't bear ripping up ! I shall say what will horrify you all ! Delirium blackens a poor fellow sadly among his friends, doesn't it ? Babbling devil—what can silence

it? If you should hear me beginning to *let out*, suffocate me,—do, Doctor.”

“Any chance of my giving the GREAT CUT this time, Doctor, eh?” he inquired the same evening, with great apparent nonchalance. Seeing my puzzled air—for I did not exactly comprehend the expression, “great cut,”—he asked quickly, “Doctor, shall I die, d’ye think?” I told him I certainly apprehended great danger, for his symptoms began to look very serious. “Then the ship must be cleared for action. What is the best way of ensuring recovery, provided it is *to be*?” I told him that, among other things, he must be kept very quiet—must not have his mind excited by visitors.

“Nurse, ring the bell for George,” said he, suddenly interrupting me. The valet in a few moments answered the summons. “George, d’ye value your neck, eh?” The man bowed. “Then, harkee, see you don’t let in a living soul to see me, except the medical people. Friends, relatives, mother, brothers, sisters, harkee, sirrah! shut them all out—And, *duns*—mind—*duns* especially. If —— should come, and get inside the door, kick him out again; and if —— comes, and ——, and ——, tell them, that if they don’t mind what they are about, I’ll die, if it’s only to cheat them.” The man bowed and retired. “And—and—Doctor, what else?”

“If you should appear approaching your end, Mr Effingstone, you would allow us, perhaps, to call in a clergyman to assist you in your devo”——

“What—eh—a parson? Oh, —— it! no, no—out of the question—*non ad rem*, I assure you,” he replied hastily. “D’ye think I can’t roll down to hell fast enough,

without having my wheels oiled by *their* hypocritical humbug? Don't name it again, Doctor, on any account, I beg."

* * * He grew rapidly worse, but ultimately recovered. His injunctions were obeyed to the letter; for his man George idolized his master, and turned a deaf ear to *all* applications for admission to his master's chamber. It was well there was no one of his friends or relatives present to listen to his ravings; for the disgorings of his polluted soul were horrible. His progress towards convalescence was by very slow steps; for the energies of both mind and body had been dreadfully shaken. His illness, however, had worked little or no alteration in his moral sentiments—or, if any thing, for the worse.

"It won't do at all, will it, Doctor?" said Mr Effingstone, when I was visiting him, one morning, at the house of a titled relation in —— Square, whither he had been removed to prepare for a jaunt to the Continent. "What do you allude to, Mr Effingstone?—*What* won't do?" I asked, for I knew not to what he alluded, as the question was the first break of a long pause in our conversation, which had been quite of a miscellaneous character. "*What* won't do? Why, the sort of life I have been leading about town these two or three last years," he replied. "Egad! Doctor, it has nearly wound me up, has not it?"

"Indeed, Mr Effingstone, I think so. You have had a very, very narrow escape—have been within a hair's breadth of your grave."—"Ay," he exclaimed, with a sigh, passing his hand rapidly over his noble forehead, "'twas a complete *toss up* whether I should go or stay!

I look somewhat shaken—*une roue qui se déraye*—do I not, faith?—But come, come, the good ship has weathered the storm bravely, though she *has* been battered a little in her timbers!” said he, striking his breast; and she’s fit for sea again already,—with a little caulking, that is. Heigho! what a fool illness makes a man! I’ve had some of the strangest, oddest twingings—such gleams and visions!—What d’ye think, Doctor, I’ve had dinging in my ears night and day, like a dismal church bell? Why, a passage from old Persius, and this is it, (you know I was a *dab* at Latin, once, Doctor,) *rotundo ore*,—

Magne Pater divum! sævos punire tyrannos
 Haud aliâ ratione velis, quum dira libido
 Moverit ingenium, ferventi tincta veneno;
 —Virtutem videant—intabescantque relictâ! *

True and forcible enough, isn’t it?”

“ Yes,” I replied; and expressed my satisfaction at his altered sentiments. “ He might rely on it,” I ventured to assure him, “ that the paths of virtue, of religion” —— I was getting on too fast!

“ Pho, pho, Doctor! No humbug, I beg—come, come, no humbug—no nonsense of that sort! I meant nothing of the kind, I can assure you! I’m a better Bentley than you, I see! What d’ye think is *my* reading of ‘ *virtutem videant* ?’—Why, let them get wives when they’re worn out, and want nursing—ah, ha!—Curse me! I’d go on raking—ay, I would, stern as you look about it!—but I’m too much the worse for wear at present—I must recruit a little.”

“ Mr Effingstone, I’m really confounded at hearing

* PERS. Sat. iii.

you talk in so light a strain ! Forgive me, my dear sir, but" ——

" Fiddle-de-dee, my dear Doctor ! Of course, I'll forgive you, if you won't repeat the offence. 'Tis unpleasant—a nuisance—'tis, upon my soul ! Well, however, what do you think is the upshot of the whole—the practical point—the winding up of affairs—the balancing of the books"—he delighted in accumulations of this sort—" the shutting up of the volume, eh ? I'm going to get married—I am, by —— ! I'm at dead-low water-mark in money matters ; and, in short, I repeat it, I intend to marry—a gold bag ! A good move, isn't it ? But, to be candid, I can't take all the credit of the thing to myself either, having been a trifle bored, bullied, *badgered* into it by the family. They say the world cries shame on me ! Simpletons, why listen to the world !—I only laugh, ha, ha, ha ! and cry, curse on the world ; and so we are quits with one another * !—By the way, the germ of that's to be found in that worthy old fellow Plautus !"

All this, uttered with Mr Effingstone's characteristic emphasis and rapidity of tone and manner, conveyed his real sentiments ; and it was not long before he carried them into effect. He spent two or three months in the south of France ; and not long after his return to Eng-

[* " What are the thousands that have been laughing at us, but company ?"—" Laard, my dear," returned he with the greatest good humour, " you seem immensely chagrined ; but b——t me !—*when the world laughs at me, I laugh at all the world—and so we are even.*"
CITIZEN OF THE WORLD—Letter LIV.

It is said that the germ of the observation in the text, is " to be found in *Plautus*." I do not recollect it *there* : possibly Effingstone had some indistinct recollection of this passage from Goldsmith.—Ed.]

land, with restored health and energies, he singled out from among the many, many women who would have exulted in being an object of the attentions of the accomplished, the *distingué* Effingstone, Lady E—— —, the very flower of English aristocratical beauty, daughter of a distinguished peer, and sole heiress to the immense estates of an aged Baronet in ——shire.

The unceasing exclusive attentions exacted from her suitor by this haughty young beauty, operated for a while as a salutary check upon Mr Effingstone's reviving propensities to dissipation. So long as there was the most distant possibility of his being rejected, he was her willing slave at all hours, on all occasions, yielding implicit obedience, and making incessant sacrifices of his own personal conveniencies. As soon, however, as he had "run down the game," as he called it, and the lady was so far compromised in the eyes of the world, as to render retreat next to impossible, he began to slacken in his attentions; not, however, so palpably and visibly as to alarm either her ladyship or any of their mutual relations or friends. He compensated for the attentions he was obliged to pay her by day, by the most extravagant nightly excesses. The pursuits of intellect, of literature, and philosophy, were utterly, and apparently finally, discarded—and for what? For wallowing swinishly in the foulest sinks of depravity, herding among the acknowledged outcasts, commingling intimately with the very scum and refuse of society, battenning on the rottenness of obscenity, and revelling amid the hellish orgies celebrated nightly in haunts of nameless infamy. Gambling, gluttony, drunkenness, harlotry, blasphemy!——

[I cannot bring myself to make public the shocking details with which the following five pages of Dr ——'s Diary are occupied. They are too revolting for the columns of this distinguished Magazine, and totally unfit for the eyes of its miscellaneous readers. If printed, they would appear to many absolutely incredible. They are little else than a corroboration of what is advanced in the sentences immediately preceding this interjected paragraph. What follows must be given only in a fragmentary form—the cup of horror must be poured out before the reader, only *κατὰ στήθονα*.*]

Mr Effingstone, one morning, accompanied Lady E—— and her mother to one of the fashionable shops, for the purpose of aiding the former in her choice of some beautiful Chinese toys, to complete the ornamental department of her boudoir. After having purchased some of the most splendid and costly articles which had been exhibited, the ladies drew on their gloves, and gave each an arm to Mr Effingstone to lead them to the carriage. Lady E—— was in a flutter of unusually animated spirits, and was complimenting Mr Effingstone, in enthusiastic terms, on the taste with which he had guided their purchases. They had left the shop door, and the footman was letting down the carriage steps, when a very young woman, elegantly dressed, who happened to be passing at that moment, seemingly in a state of deep dejection, suddenly started on seeing and recognising Mr Effingstone, placed herself between them and the carriage, and, lifting her clasped hands, exclaimed, in piercing accents, “ Oh, Henry, Henry, Henry ! how cruelly you have deserted your poor ruined girl ! What have I

* *Alex. in Aphrodisio.*

done to deserve it? I'm broken-hearted, and can rest nowhere ! I've been walking up and down M—— Street nearly three hours this morning to get a sight of you, but could not ! Oh, Henry, how differently you said you would behave before you brought me up from —— shire !" All this was uttered with the impassioned vehemence and rapidity of highly excited feelings, and uninterruptedly ; for both Lady E—— and her mother seemed perfectly petrified, and stood pale and speechless. Mr Effingstone, too, was for a moment thunderstruck ; but an instant's reflection showed him the necessity of acting with decision one way or another. Though deadly pale, he did not disclose any other symptom of agitation ; and, with an assumed air of astonishment and irreognition, exclaimed, concernedly, " Poor creature ! unfortunate thing ! Some strange mistake this !"—" Oh, no, no, no, Henry, it's no mistake ! You know me well enough—I'm your own poor Hannah !"

" Pho, pho ! nonsense, woman ! *I* never saw you before."

" Never saw me ! never saw me !" almost shrieked the girl ; " and is it to come to this ?"

" Woman don't be foolish—cease, or we must give you over to an officer as an impostor," said Mr Effingstone, the perspiration bursting from every pore. " Come, come, your ladyships had better allow me to hand you into the carriage. See, there's a crowd collecting."

" No, Mr Effingstone," replied Lady E——'s mother, with excessive agitation ; " this very singular—strange affair—if it *is* a mistake—had better be set right on the spot. Here, young woman, can you tell me what is the name of this gentleman ?" pointing to Mr Effingstone.

“Effingstone—Effingstone, to be sure ma’am,” sobbed the girl, looking imploringly at him. The instant she had uttered his name, the two ladies, dreadfully agitated, withdrew their arms from his, and, with the footman’s assistance, stepped into their carriage, and drove off rapidly, leaving Mr Effingstone bowing, kissing his hand, and assuring them that he should “soon settle this absurd affair,” and be at — Street before their ladyships. They heard him not, however ; for the instant the carriage had set off, Lady E—— fainted.

“Young woman, you’re quite mistaken in me—I never saw you before. Here is my card—come to me at eight to-night,” he added, in an under tone, so as to be heard by none but her he addressed. She took the hint, appeared pacified, and each withdrew different ways—Mr Effingstone almost suffocated with suppressed execrations. He flung himself into a hackney-coach, and ordered it to — Street, intending to assure Lady E——, with a smile, that he had “instantly put an end to the ridiculous affair.” His knock, however, brought him a prompt “Not at home,” though their carriage had but the instant before driven from the door. He jumped again into the coach, almost gnashing his teeth with fury, drove home, and despatched his groom with a note, and orders to wait an answer. He soon brought it back, with the intelligence that Lord and Lady — had given their porter orders to reject all letters or messages from Mr Effingstone ! So there was an end of all hopes from *that* quarter. This is the history of what was mysteriously hinted at in one of the papers of the day, as a strange occurrence in high life, which would probably break off a matrimonial affair long considered as settled.’

—But how did Mr Effingstone receive his ruined dupe at the appointed hour of eight? He answered her expected knock himself.

“Now, look, ——!” said he, fiercely, extending his arm with clenched fist towards her, “if ever you presume to darken my doors again, by ——, I’ll murder you! I give you fair warning. You’ve ruined me—you have, you accursed ——!”

“Oh, my God! What am I to do to live? What is to become of me?” groaned the victim.

“Do? Why, go and be ——! And here’s something to help you on your way—there!” and flinging her a cheque for £50, he shut the door violently in her face.

Mr Effingstone now plunged into profligacy with a spirit of almost diabolical desperation. Divers dark hints—stinging innuendoes—appeared in the papers of his disgraceful notoriety in certain scenes of an abominable description. But he laughed at them. His family at length cast him off, and refused to recognise him till he chose to alter his courses—to make the ‘*amende*’ to society.

Mr Effingstone was boxing one morning with Belasco—I think it was—at the latter’s rooms; and was preparing to plant a hit which the fighter had defied him to do, when he suddenly dropt his guard, turned pale, and, in a moment or two, fell fainting into the arms of the astounded boxer. He had, several days previously, suspected himself the subject of indisposition—how could it be otherwise, keeping such hours, and living such a life as he did—but not of so serious a nature as to prevent him from going out as usual. As soon as he had

recovered, and swallowed a few drops of spirits and water, he drove home, intending to have sent immediately for Mr —, the well-known surgeon ; but on arriving at his rooms, he found a travelling carriage-and-four waiting before the door, for the purpose of conveying him instantly to the bedside of his dying mother, in a distant part of England, as she wished personally to communicate to him something of importance before she died. This he learnt from two of his relatives, who were up stairs giving directions to his servant to pack up his clothes, and make other preparations for his journey, so that nothing might detain him from setting off the instant he arrived at his rooms. He was startled—alarmed—confounded at all this. Good God ! he thought, what was to become of him ? He was utterly unfit to undertake a journey, requiring instant medical attendance, which had been too long deferred ; for his dissipation had already made rapid inroads on his constitution. Yet what was to be done ? His situation was such as could not be communicated to his relatives, for he did not choose to encounter their sarcastic reproaches. He had nothing for it but to get into the carriage with them, go down to — shire, and, when there, devise some plausible pretext for returning instantly to town. That, however, he found impracticable. His mother would not trust him out of her sight one instant, night or day, but kept his hand close locked in hers ; he was also surrounded by the congregated members of the family, and could literally scarce stir out of the house an instant. He dissembled his illness with tolerable success, till his aggravated agonies drove him almost beside himself. Without breathing a syllable to any one but his own man,

whom he took with him, he suddenly left the house, and without even a change of clothes, threw himself into the first London coach ; and, by two o'clock the next day, was at his own rooms in M—— Street, in a truly deplorable condition, and attended by Sir —— and myself. The consternation of his family in —— shire may be conceived. He coined some story about being obliged to stand second in a duel,—but his real state was soon discovered. Nine weeks of unmitigated agony were passed by Mr Effingstone—the virulence of his disorder for a long time setting at defiance all that medicine could do. This illness, also, broke him down sadly, and we recommended to him a second sojourn in the south of France—for which he set out the instant he could undertake the journey with safety. Much of his peculiar character was developed in this illness ; that haughty, reckless spirit of defiance,—that contemptuous disregard of the sacred consolations of religion,—that sullen indifference as to the event which might await him,—which his previous character would have warranted me in predicting.

* * * * *

About seven months from the period last mentioned, I received, one Sunday evening, a note, written in hurried characters ; and a hasty glance at the seal, which bore Mr Effingstone's crest, filled me with sudden vague apprehensions that some misfortune or other had befallen him. This was the note :—

“ Dear Doctor,—For God's sake, come and see me immediately, for I have this day arrived in London from the Continent, and am suffering the tortures of the damned, both in mind and body. Come, come—in God's name, come instantly, or I shall go mad, or destroy my-

self. Not a word of my return *to any one* till I have seen you. You will find me—in short, my man will accompany you. Yours in agony,

“St J. H. EFFINGSTONE.”

“Sunday evening, November, 18—.”

Tongue cannot utter the dismay with which this note filled me. His unexpected return from abroad—the obscure and distant part of the town (St George’s in the East) where he had established himself—the dreadful terms in which his note was couched, revived, amidst a variety of vague conjectures, certain fearful apprehensions for him which I had begun to entertain before he quitted England. I ordered out my chariot instantly; his groom mounted the box to guide the coachman, and we drove down rapidly. A sudden recollection of the contents of several of the letters he had sent me latterly from the Continent, at my request, served to corroborate my worst fears. I had given him over for lost, by the time my chariot drew up opposite the house where he had so strangely taken up his abode. The street and neighbourhood, though not clearly discernible through the fogs of a November evening, contrasted strangely with the aristocratical regions to which my patient had been accustomed. — Row was narrow, and the houses were small, yet clean and creditable looking. On entering No. —, the landlady, a person of quiet respectable appearance, told me that *Mr Hardy*—for such, it seems, was the name he chose to go by in these parts—had just retired to rest, as he felt fatigued and poorly, and she was just going to make him some gruel. She spoke in a tone of flurried excitation, and with an air of doubt, which were easily attributable to her aston-

ishment at a man of Mr Effingstone's appearance and attendance, with such superior travelling equipments, dropping into such a house and neighbourhood as hers. I repaired to his bedchamber immediately. It was a small comfortably furnished room ; the fire was lit, and two candles were burning on the drawers. On the bed, the plain chintz curtains of which were only half drawn, lay St John Henry Effingstone. I must pause a moment to describe his appearance, as it struck me on first looking at him. It may be thought rather far-fetched, perhaps, but I could not help comparing him, in my own mind, to a gem set in the midst of faded tarnished embroidery. The coarse texture of the bed-furniture, the ordinary style of the room, its constrained dimension, contrasted strikingly with the indications of elegance and fashion afforded by the scattered clothes, toilet, and travelling equipment, &c.—together with the person and manners—of its present occupant ; who lay on a bed all tossed and tumbled, with only a few minutes' restlessness. A dazzling diamond ring sparkled on the little finger of his left hand, and was the only ornament he ever wore. There was something, also, in the snowiness, simplicity, and fineness of his linen, which alone might have evidenced the superior consideration of its wearer, even were that not sufficiently visible in the noble, commanding outline of his features, faded though they were, and shrinking beneath the inroads of illness and dissipation. His forehead was white and ample ; his eye had lost none of its fire, though it gleamed with restless energy ; in a word, there was that ease and loftiness in his bearing—that indescribable *manière d'être*—which are inseparable from high birth and breeding. So much for the appearance of things on my entrance.

“How are you, Mr Effingstone—how are you, my dear sir?” said I, sitting down by the bedside.

“Doctor—the pains of hell have got hold upon me. I am undone,” he replied gloomily, in a broken voice, and extended to me a hand cold as marble.

“Is it as you suspected in your last letter to me from Rouen, Mr Effingstone?” I inquired, after a pause. He shook his head, and covered his face with both hands, but made me no answer. Thinking he was in tears, I said, in a soothing tone,—“Come, come, my dear sir, don’t be carried away : don’t”——

“Faugh ! Do you take me for a puling child, or a woman, Doctor ? Don’t suspect me again of such contemptible pusillanimity, low as I am fallen,” he replied, with startling sternness, removing his hands from his face.

“I hope, after all, that matters are not so desperate as your fears would persuade you,” said I, feeling his pulse.

“Doctor, don’t delude me ; all is over, I know it is. A horrible death is before me ; but I shall meet it like a man. I have made my bed, and must lie upon it. I have not only strewn, but lit, the pile of my own immolation !”——

“Come, come, Mr Effingstone, don’t be so gloomy—so hopeless ; the exhausted powers of nature *may* yet be revived,” said I, after having asked him many questions.

“Doctor ——, I’ll soon put an end to that strain of yours. ’Tis absurd—pardon me—but it *is*. Reach me one of those candles, please.” I did so. “Now, I’ll show you how to translate a passage of Persius :

Tentemus fauces :—*tenero latet ulcus in ore*
Putre, quod haud deceat plebeia radere beta !

Eh, you recollect it? Well, look!—What say you to this; isn't it frightful?" he asked, bitterly, raising the candle that I might look into his mouth. It was, alas, as he said! In fact, his whole constitution had been long tainted, and exhibited symptoms of soon breaking up altogether. I feared, from the period of my attendance on him during the illness which drove him last to the Continent, that it was beyond human power to dislodge the harpy that had fixed its cruel fangs deeply, inextricably, in his vitals. Could it be wondered at, even by himself? Neglect, in the first instance, added to a persevering course of profligacy, had doomed him, long, long before, to premature and horrible decay! And though it can scarcely be credited, it is nevertheless the fact,—that even on the Continent, in the character of a shattered invalid, the infatuated man resumed those dissolute courses which in England had already hurried him almost to death's door!

"My good God, Mr Effingstone," I inquired almost paralyzed with amazement at hearing him describe recent scenes in which he had mingled, which would have made even satyrs skulk ashamed into the woods of old, "how *could* you have been so insane—so stark staring mad, to say nothing else of it?"

"By instinct, Doctor—by instinct! The *nature* of the beast!" he replied, through his closed teeth, and with an unconscious clenching of his hands. Many inquiries into his past and present symptoms forewarned me that his case would probably be marked by more appalling features than any that had ever come under my care; and that there was not a ray of hope that he would survive the long, lingering, and maddening agonies, which

were "measured out to him from the poisoned chalice," which he had "commended to his own lips." At the time I am speaking of—I mean when I paid him the visit above described—his situation was not far from that of Job, described in chap. xx.

* * * * *

He shed no tears, and repeatedly strove, but in vain, to repress sighs with which his breast heaved, nearly to bursting, while I pointed out, in obedience to his determination to know the worst, some portions of the dreary prospect before him.

"Horrible! hideous!" he exclaimed, in a low broken tone, his flesh creeping from head to foot. "*How* shall I endure it!—O, Epictetus, how?" He relapsed into silence, with his eyes fixed on the ceiling, and his hands joined over his breast, and pointing upwards, in a posture which I considered supplicatory. I rejoiced to see it, and ventured to say, after much hesitation, that I was delighted to see him at length looking to the right quarter for support and consolation.

"Bah!" he exclaimed impetuously, removing his hands and eyeing me with sternness, almost approaching fury, "*why* will you persist in pestering your patients with twaddle of that sort?—*eandem semper canens cantilenam, ad nauseam usque*—as though you carried a psalter in your pocket? When I want to listen to any thing of that kind, why, I'll pay a parson! Haven't I a tide enough of horror to bear up against already, without your bringing a sea of superstition upon me? No more of it—no more—'tis foul." I felt roused myself, at last, to something like correspondent emotion; for there was an insolence of assumption in his tone which I could not brook.

“ Mr Effingstone,” said I, calmly, “ this silly swagger will not do. ’Tis unworthy of you—unscholarly—ungentlemanly. You *force* me to say so. I beg I may hear no more of it, or you and I must part. I have never been accustomed to such treatment, and I cannot now learn how to endure it from you. From what quarter can you expect support or fortitude,” said I, in a milder tone, seeing him startled and surprised at my tone and manner, “ except the despised consolations of religion ?”

“ Doctor, you are too superior to petty feelings not to overlook a little occasional petulance in such a wretched fellow as I am ! You ask me whither I look for support ? I reply, to the energies of my own mind—the tried disciplined energies of my own mind, Doctor—a mind that never knew what fear was—that no disastrous combinations of misfortune could ever yet shake from its fortitude ! What but *this* is it, that enables me to shut my ears to the whisperings of some pitying fiend, who, knowing what hideous tortures await me, has stepped out of hell to come and advise me to *suicide*—eh ?” he inquired, his eye glaring on me with a very fearful expression. “ However, as religion, that is, your Christian religion, is a subject on which you and I can never agree—an old bone of contention between us—why, the less said about it the better. It’s useless to irritate a man whose mind is made up. I shall *never*—I *will* never—be a believer. May I perish first !” he concluded, with angry vehemence.

The remainder of the interview I spent in endeavouring to persuade him to relinquish his present unsuitable lodgings, and return to the sphere of his friends and relations—but in vain. He was fixedly determined to con-

tinue in that obscure hole, he said, till there was about a week or so between him and death, and then he would return, "and die in the bosom of his family, as the phrase was." Alas, however, I knew but too well, that, in the event of his adhering to that resolution, he was fated to expire in the bed where he then lay ; for I foresaw but too truly that the termination of his illness would be attended with circumstances rendering removal utterly impossible. He made me pledge my word that I would not, without his express request or sanction, apprize any member of his family, or any of his friends, that he had returned to England. It was in vain that I expostulated—that I represented the responsibility imposed upon me ; and reminded him, that, in the event of any thing serious and sudden befalling him, the censure of all his relatives would be levelled at me. He was immovable. " Doctor, you know well I dare not see them, as well on my own account as theirs," said he, bitterly. He begged me to prescribe him a powerful anodyne draught ; for that he could get no rest at nights—that an intense, racking pain was gnawing all his bones from morning to evening—from evening to morning : and what with this and other dreadful concomitants, he " was," he said, " suffering the tortures of the damned, and perhaps worse." I complied with his request, and ordered him also many other medicines and applications, and promised to see him soon in the morning. I was accordingly with him about twelve the next day. He was sitting up, and in his dressing-gown, before the fire, in great pain, and suffering under the deepest dejection. He complained heavily of the intense and unrelenting agony he had endured all night long, and thought, that,

from some cause or other, the laudanum draught I ordered, had tended to make him only more acutely sensible of the pain. "It is a peculiar and horrible sensation ; and I cannot give you an adequate idea of it," he said : "it is as though the marrow in my bones were transformed into something animated—into blind-worms, writhing, biting, and stinging incessantly"—and he shuddered, as did I also, at the revolting comparison. He put me upon a minute exposition of the *rationale* of his disorder : and if ever I was at a loss for adequate expressions or illustrations, he supplied them with a readiness, an exquisite appositeness, which, added to his astonishing acuteness in comprehending the most strictly technical details, filled me with admiration for his great powers of mind, and poignant regret at their miserable desecration.

"Well, I don't think you can give me any efficient relief, Doctor," said he, "and I am therefore bent on trying a scheme of my own."

"And what, pray, may that be ?" I inquired, curiously, with a sigh.

"I'll tell you my preparations. I've ordered—by ——!—nearly a hundred weight of the strongest tobacco that's to be bought, and thousands of pipes ; and with these I intend to smoke myself into stupidity, or rather, insensibility, if possible, till I can't undertake to say whether I live or not ; and my good fellow, George, is to be reading me Don Quixote the while." Oh, with what a sorrowful air of forced gaiety was all this uttered !

One sudden burst of bitterness I well recollect. I was saying, while putting on my gloves to go, that I hoped to see him in better spirits the next time I called.

“ Better spirits ! Ha ! ha ! How the —— can I be in better spirits—an exile from society—and absolutely *rotting* away here—in such a contemptible hovel as this, among a set of base-born brutal savages?—faugh ! faugh ! It *does* need something here—here,” pressing his hand to his forehead, “ to bear it—ay, it does !” I thought his tones were tremulous, and that for the first time I had ever known them so ; and I could not help thinking the tears came into his eyes, for he started suddenly from me, and affected to be gazing at some passing object in the street. I saw he was beginning to droop under a consciousness of the bitter degradation into which he had sunk—the wretched prospect of his “ sun’s going down at noon—and in darkness !” I saw that the strength of mind to which he clung so pertinaciously for support, was fast disappearing, like snow beneath the sunbeam. * * *

[Then follow the details of his disease, which are so shocking as to be unfit for any but professional eyes. They represent all the energies of his nature as shaken beyond the possibility of restoration—his constitution thoroughly polluted—wholly undermined. That the remedies resorted to had been almost more dreadful than the disease—and yet exhibited in vain ! In the next twenty pages of the Diary, the shades of horror are represented as gradually closing and darkening around this wretched victim of debauchery ; and the narrative is carried forward through three months. A few extracts only, from this portion, are fitting for the reader.]

Friday, January 5.—Mr Effingstone continues in the same deplorable state described in my former entry. It is absolutely revolting to enter his room, the effluvia

are so sickening—so overpowering. I am compelled to use a vinaigrette incessantly, as well as eau de Cologne, and other scents, in profusion. I found him engaged, as usual, deep in *Petronius Arbiter*!—He still makes the same wretched show of reliance on the strength and firmness of his mental powers; but his worn and haggard features—the burning brilliance of his often half-frenzied eyes—the broken, hollow tones of his voice—his sudden starts of apprehension—believe every word he utters. He describes his bodily sufferings as frightful. Indeed, Mrs —— has often told me, that his groans both disturb and alarm the neighbours, even as far as on the other side of the street! The very watchman has several times been so much startled in passing, at hearing his groans, that he has knocked at the door to inquire about them. Neither Sir —— nor I can think of any thing that seems likely to assuage his agonies. Even laudanum has failed us altogether, though it has been given in unprecedented quantities. I think I can say, with truth and sincerity, that scarce the wealth of the Indies should tempt me to undertake the management of another such case. I am losing my appetite—loathe animal food—am haunted day and night by the piteous spectacle which I have to encounter daily in Mr Effingstone. Oh! that Heaven would terminate his tortures—surely he has suffered enough! I am sure he would hail the prospect of death with ecstasy!

Wednesday, 10.—Poor, infatuated, obstinate Effingstone, will not yet allow me to communicate with any of his family or friends, though he knows they are almost distracted at not hearing from him, fancying him yet abroad. Colonel —— asked me the other day, ear-

nestly, when I last heard from Mr Effingstone ! I wonder my conscious looks did not betray me. I almost wish they had. Good God ! in what a painful predicament I am placed ! What am I to do ? Shall I tell them all about him, and disregard consequences ? Oh—no—no !—how can that be, when my word and honour are solemnly pledged to the contrary ?

Saturday, 20.—Poor Effingstone has experienced a signal instance of the ingratitude and heartlessness of mere men of the world. He sent his man, some time ago, with a confidential note to Captain —, formerly one of his most intimate acquaintances, stating briefly the shocking circumstances in which he is placed, and begging him to call and see him. The Captain sent back a *vivâ voce* (!) message, that he should feel happy in calling on Mr Effingstone in a few days' time, and would then, but that he was busy making up a match at billiards, and balancing his betting-book, &c. &c. &c. !—This day the fellow rode up to the door, and—*left a card for Mr Effingstone, without asking to see him !* Heartless, contemptible thing !—I drove up about a quarter of an hour after this *gentleman* had left. Poor Effingstone could not repress tears, while informing me of the above. “ Would you believe it, Doctor,” said he, “ that Captain — was one of my most intimate companions—that he has won very many hundred pounds of my money—and that I have stood his second in a duel ? ” “ Oh, yes—I could believe it all, and much more ! ”

“ My poor man, George,” he resumed, “ is worth a million of such puppies ! Don't you think the good, faithful fellow looks ill ? He is at my bed-side twenty times a night ! Pray try and do something for him !

I've left him a trifling annuity out of the wreck of my fortune, poor fellow !" and the rebellious tears again glistened in his eyes. His tortures are unmitigated.

Friday, 26.—Surely, surely, I have never seen, and seldom heard or read, of such sufferings as the wretched Effingstone's. He strives to endure them with the fortitude and patience of a martyr ; or rather, is struggling to exhibit a spirit of sullen, stoical submission to his fate, such as is inculcated in Arrian's Discourses of Epictetus, which he reads almost all day*. His anguish is so excruciating and uninterrupted, that I am astonished how he retains the use of his reason. All power of locomotion has disappeared long ago. The only parts of his body he can move now, are his fingers, toes, and head—which latter he sometimes shakes about, in a sudden ecstasy of pain, with such frightful violence as would, one would think, almost suffice to sever it from his shoulders ! The flesh of the lower extremities—the flesh——

* * Horrible ! All sensation has ceased in them for a fortnight !—He describes the agonies about his stomach and bowels, to be as though wolves were ravenously gnawing and mangling all within.

Oh, my God ! if " men about town," in London, or elsewhere, could but see the hideous spectacle Mr Effing-

* Though it may be thought far-fetched and improbable, to represent my patient engaged in the perusal of such works as are mentioned in the text, I can assure the reader, that I have known several men of the world—especially if with any pretension to scholarship—endeavouring to steel themselves against the pain and terrors of the death-bed, by an earnest study of the old stoic philosophy ; any thing, of course, being better than the mild and glorious consolations of Christianity.

stone presents, surely it would palsy them in the pursuit of ruin, and scare them into the paths of virtue !

Mrs ———, his landlady, is so ill with attendance on him—almost poisoned by the foul air in his chamber—that she is gone to the house of a relative for a few weeks, in a distant part of the town, having first engaged one of the poor neighbours to supply her place as Mr Effingstone's nurse. The people opposite, and on each side of the house, are complaining again, loudly, of the strange nocturnal noises heard in Mr Effingstone's room. They are his groanings ! * *

Tuesday, 31.—Again I have visited that scene of loathsomeness and horror, Mr Effingstone's chamber. The nurse and George told me he had been raving deliriously all night long. I found him incredibly altered in countenance, so much so, that I should hardly have recognised his features. He was mumbling with his eyes closed, when I entered the room.

“ Doctor !” he exclaimed in a tone of doubt and fear, such as I had never known from him before, “ you have not heard me abuse the Bible lately, have you ?”

“ Not *very* lately, Mr Effingstone,” I replied, pointedly.

“ Good,” said he, with his usual decision and energy of manner. “ There are awful things in that book—aren't there, Doctor ?”

“ Many very awful things there are indeed,” I replied, with a sigh.

“ I thought so—I thought so. Pray” ——— his manner grew suddenly perturbed, and he paused for a moment, as if to recollect himself—“ Pray—pray” ——— again he paused, but could not succeed in disguising his

trepidation, "do you happen to recollect whether there are such words in the Bible as—as—'MANY STRIPES?'"

"Yes, there are; and they form part of a very fearful passage," said I, quoting the verse as nearly as I could. He listened silently. His features swelled with suppressed emotion. There was horror in his eye.

"Doctor, what a—a—remark—able—nay, hideous dream I had last night! I thought a fiend came and took me to a gloomy belfry, or some other such place, and muttered 'Many stripes—many stripes,' in my ear; and the huge bell tolled me into madness, for all the damned danced around me to the sound of it; ha, ha!" He added, with a faint laugh, after a pause, "There's something cu—cur—cursedly *odd* in the *coincidence*, isn't there? How it would have frightened *some*!" he continued, a forced smile flitting over his haggard features as if in mockery. "But it is easily to be accounted for—the intimate connexion—sympathy—between mind and matter, reciprocally affecting each other—affecting each—ha, ha, ha!—Doctor, it's no use keeping up this damned farce any longer. Human nature won't bear it! D——n! I'm going down to HELL! I am!" said he, almost yelling out the words. I had never before witnessed such a fearful manifestation of his feelings! I almost started from the chair on which I was sitting.

"Why"—he continued, in nearly the same tone and manner, as if he had lost all self-control, "*what* is it that has maddened me all my life, and left me sober only at this ghastly hour—too late?" My agitation would not permit me to do more than whisper a few unconnected words of encouragement, almost inaudible to myself. In about five minutes' time, neither of us having broken the

silence of the interval, he said in a calmer tone, "Doctor, be good enough to wipe my forehead—will you?" I did so. "You know better, Doctor, of course, than to attach any importance to the nonsensical rantings extorted by deathbed agonies, eh? Don't dying people, at least those who die in great pain, almost always express themselves so? How apt superstition is to rear its dismal flag over the prostrate energies of one's soul, when the body is racked by tortures like mine! Oh,—oh,—oh,—that maddening sensation about the centre of my stomach! Doctor,"—he added, after a pause, with a grim air—"go home, and forget all the stuff you have heard me utter to-day—'Richard's himself again!'"

Thursday, 2d February.—On arriving this morning at — Row, I was shown into the back parlour, where sat the nurse, very sick and faint. She begged me to procure a substitute, for that she was nearly killed herself, and nothing should tempt her to continue in her present situation. Poor thing! I did not wonder at it. I told her I would send a nurse from one of the hospitals that evening; and then inquired what sort of a night Mr Effingstone had passed. "Terrible," she said; "groaning, shaking, and roaring all night long,—'Many stripes,' 'Many stripes,' 'Oh, God of mercy!' and inquiring perpetually for you." I repaired to the fatal chamber immediately, though latterly my spirits began to fail me whenever I approached the door. I was going to take my usual seat in the arm-chair by the bedside.

"Don't sit there—don't sit there," groaned, or rather gasped, Mr Effingstone, "for a hideous being sat in that chair all night long,"—every muscle in his face crept and shrunk with horror,—"muttering, '*Many stripes!*'"

Doctor, order that blighted chair to be taken away, broken up, and burnt, every splinter of it ! Let no human being ever sit in it again ! And give instructions to the people about me never to desert me for a moment—or—or—carry me off !—they will ! * * * My frenzied fancy conjures up the ghastliest objects that can scare man into madness.” He paused.

“ Great God, Doctor ! suppose, after all, what the Bible says should prove true !”—he literally gnashed his teeth, and looked a truer image of Despair than I have ever seen represented in pictures, on the stage, or in real life. “ Why, Mr Effingstone, if it *should*, it need not be to your sorrow, unless you choose to make it so,” said I, in a soothing tone.

“ Needn’t it, needn’t it ?” with an abstracted air—
 “ Needn’t it ? Oh, good !—hope—There, there it sat, all night long—there ! I’ve no recollection of any distinct personality, and yet I thought it sometimes looked like—Of course,” he added, after a pause, and a sigh of exhaustion—“ of course these phantoms, or similar ones, must often have been described to you by dying people—eh ?”

Friday 3d.— * * * He was in a strangely altered mood to-day ; for though his condition might be aptly described by the words “ dead alive,” his calm demeanour, his tranquillized features, and the mild expression of his eye, assured me he believed what he said, when he told me that his disorder had “ taken a turn,”—that the “ crisis was past ;” and he should *recover* ! Alas, was it ever known that dead *mortified* flesh ever resumed its life and functions ! To save himself from the spring of a tiger, he could not have moved a foot or

a finger, and that for the last week ! Poor, poor Mr Effingstone began to thank me for my attentions to him during his illness ; said, he “ owed his life to my consummate skill ;” and he would “ trumpet my fame to the Andes, if I succeeded in bringing him through !”

“ It has been a very horrible affair, Doctor—hasn’t it ?” said he.

“ Very, very, Mr Effingstone ; and it is my duty to tell you, there is yet much horror before you !”

“ Ah ! well, well ! I see you don’t want me to be too sanguine—too impatient. It’s kindly meant—very ! Doctor, when I leave here, I leave it an *altered man* ! Come, does not that gratify you, eh ?”

I could not help a sigh. He *would* be an *altered man*, and that very shortly ! He mistook the feelings which prompted the sigh. “ Mind—not that I’m going to commence *saint*—far, oh, *very* far from it ; but—but—I don’t *despair* of being at some time or other a Christian. I don’t, upon my honour ! The New Testament is a sublime—a—I believe—a revelation of the Almighty. My heart is quite humbled ; yet—mark me—I don’t mean exactly to say I’m a believer—not by any means ; but I can’t help thinking that my inquiries might tend to make me so.” I hinted that all these were indications of bettered feelings. I could say no more.

“ I’m bent on leading a different life to what I have led before, at all events ! Let me see—I’ll tell you what I’ve been chalking out during the night. I shall go to Lord ——’s villa in ——, whither I have often been invited, and shall read Lardner and Paley, and get them up thoroughly—I will by —— !”

“ Mr Effingstone, pardon me”——

“ Ah! I understand—’twas a mere slip of the tongue ; what’s bred in the bone, you know”——

“ I was not alluding to the oath, Mr Effingstone ; but—but it is my duty to warn you”——

“ Ah! that I’m not going the right way to work—eh? Well, at all events, I’ll consult a clergyman. The Bishop of —— is a distant connexion of our family, you know,—I’ll ask his advice ! * * Oh, Doctor, look at that rich—that blessed light of the sun ! Oh, draw aside the window curtain—let me feel it on me ! What an image of the beneficence of the Deity !—a smile flung from His face over the universe !” * I drew aside the curtain. It was a cold, clear, frosty day, and the sun shone into the room with cheerful lustre. Oh, how awfully distinct were the ravages which his wasted features had sustained ! His soul seemed to expand beneath the genial influence of the sunbeams ; and he again expressed his confident expectations of recovery.

“ Mr Effingstone, do not persist in cherishing false hopes ! Once for all,” said I, with all the deliberate solemnity I could throw into my manner, “ I assure you, in the presence of God, that, unless a miracle takes place, it is utterly impossible for you to recover, or even to last a week longer !” I thought it had killed him. His features whitened visibly as I concluded ; his eye seemed

* A provincial critic gravely says of this,—“ A fine, a noble conceit, it must be owned ; but only an expansion of one of Moore’s, in *Lalla Rookh*,—‘ ’Twas a bright smile the *Angel* threw from Heaven’s gate.’ ” Whatever may be the merit of the expression in the text, it cannot be truly charged with plagiarism. I never read *Lalla Rookh* in my life, nor ever saw or heard of the above cited passage, till it was pointed out by the Bristol critic.

to sink, and the eyelids fell. His lips presently moved, but uttered no sound. I thought he had received his death-stroke, and was immeasurably shocked at its having been from my hands, even though in the strict performance of my duty. Half an hour's time, however, saw him restored to nearly the same state in which he had been previously. I begged him to allow me to send a clergyman to him, as the best means of soothing and quieting his mind ; but he shook his head despondingly. I pressed my point, and he said deliberately, "*No.*" He muttered some such words as, "The Deity has determined on my destruction, and is permitting his devils to mock me with hopes of this sort—let me go, then, to my own place!" In this awful state of mind I was compelled to leave him. I sent a clergyman to him in my chaise—the same whom I had called to visit Mr —, (alluding to the "Scholar's Deathbed;") but he refused to see him, saying, that if he presumed to force himself into the room, he would spit in his face, though he could not rise to kick him out! The temper of his mind had changed into something perfectly diabolical since my interview with him.

Saturday, 4th.—Really my own health is suffering—my spirits are sinking through the daily horrors I have to encounter at Mr Effingstone's apartment. This morning, I sat by his bedside full half an hour, listening to him uttering nothing but groans that shook my very soul within me. He did not know me when I spoke to him, and took no notice of me whatever. At length his groans were mingled with such expressions as these, indicating that his disturbed fancy had wandered to former scenes:—

"Oh! oh!—Pitch it into him, Bob! Ten to two on

Crib! Horrible!—These dice are loaded, Wilmington; by ———, I know they are! *Seven's the main!* Ha!—*done*, by ———! * * Hector, yes—[he was alluding to a favourite race-horse]—won't 'bate a pound of his price! Your Grace shall have him for six hundred—Fore legs, only look at them!—There, there, go it! away, away! neck and neck—In, in, by ———! * * Hannah! what the ———'s become of her?—drowned? No, no, no! What a fiend incarnate that Bet ——— is! * * Oh! horror, horror, horror! Rottenness! Oh, that some one would knock me on the head and end me! * * Fire, fire! Stripes, many stripes—Stuff! You didn't fire fair. By ———, you fired before your time—[alluding, I suppose, to a duel in which he had been concerned]—Curse your cowardice!”

Such was the substance of what he uttered.—It was in vain that I tried to arrest the torrent of vile recollections.

“Doctor, Doctor, I shall die of fright!” he exclaimed an hour afterwards—“What do you think happened to me last night? I was lying here, with the fire burnt very low, and the candles gone out. George was asleep, poor fellow, and the woman gone out to get an hour's rest also. I was looking about, and suddenly saw the dim outline of a table, set, as it were, in the middle of the room. There were four chairs, faintly visible, and three ghostly figures came through that door and sat in them, one by one, leaving one vacant. They began a sort of horrid whispering, more like gasping: they were DEVILS, and talked about—*my* damnation! The fourth chair was for me, they said, and all three turned and looked me in the face. Oh! hideous—shapeless—damned!” He uttered a shuddering groan. * * *

[Here follows an account of his interview with his two brothers—the only members of the family—whom he had at last permitted to be informed of his frightful condition—that would come and see him.] * * *

He did little else than rave and howl, in a blasphemous manner, all the while they were present. He seemed hardly to be aware of their being his brothers, and to forget the place where he was. He cursed me—then Sir——, and his man George, and charged us with compassing his death, concealing his case from his family, and execrating us for not allowing him to be removed to the west end of the town. In vain we assured him that his removal was utterly impossible—the time was past—I had offered it once. He gnashed his teeth, and spit at us all! “What! die—die—DIE in this damned hole?—I won’t die here—I will go to —— Street. Take me off!—*Devils*, then do you come and carry me there!—Come—out, out, out upon you!—* * *—You have killed me, all of you!—You’re throttling me!—You’ve put a hill of iron on me—I’m dead!—all my body is dead!—* * *—George, you monster! why are you ladling fire upon me?—Where do you get it?—Out—out—out!—I’m flooded with fire!—Scorched—Scorched!—* * * Now—now for a dance of devils—Ha—I see! I see!—There’s ——, and ——, and ——, among them!—What! all three of you dead—and damned before me?—W ——! where are your loaded dice?—Filled with fire, eh?—* * *—So, you were the three devils I saw sitting at the table, eh?—Well, I shall be last—but, by ——, I’ll be the chief of you!—I’ll be king in hell!—* * *—What—what’s that fiery owl sitting at the bottom of the bed for, eh?—Kick it off—strike it!

—Away—out on thee, thou imp of hell!—I shall make thee sing presently!—Let in the snakes—let the large serpents in—I love them! I hear them writhing up stairs—they shall twine about my bed!” He began to shake his head violently from side to side, his eyes glaring like coals of fire, and his teeth gnashing. I never could have imagined any thing half so frightful. What with the highly excited state of my feelings, and the horrible scents of death which were diffused about the room, and to which not the strongest salts of ammonia, used incessantly, could render me insensible, I was obliged to leave abruptly. I knew the last act of the black tragedy was closing that night! I left word with the nurse, that so soon as Mr Effingstone should be released from his misery, she should get into a hackney-coach, and come to my house.

* * * * *

I lay tossing in bed all night long—my mind suffused with the horrors of the scene of which I have endeavoured to give some faint idea above. Were I to record half what I recollect of his hideous ravings, it would scare myself to read it!—I will not! Let them and their memory perish! Let them never meet the eye or ear of man!—I fancied myself lying side by side with the loathsome thing bearing the name of Effingstone; that I could not move away from him; that his head, shaking from side to side, as I have mentioned above, was battering my cheeks and forehead; in short, I was almost beside myself! I was in the act of uttering a fervent prayer to the Deity, that even in the eleventh hour—the *eleventh* hour—when a violent ringing of the night-bell made me spring out of bed. It was as I suspected. The nurse

had come ; and, already, all was over. My heart seemed to grow suddenly cold and motionless. I dressed myself, and went down into the drawing-room. On the sofa lay the woman : She had fainted. On recovering her senses, I asked her if all was over ; she nodded with an affrighted expression ! A little wine and water restored her self-possession. “ When did it occur ? ” I asked. “ Exactly as the clock struck three,” she replied. “ George, and I, and Mr —— the apothecary, whom we had sent for out of the next street, were standing round the bed. Mr Hardy lay tossing his head about for nearly an hour, saying all manner of horrible things. A few minutes before three he gave a loud howl, and shouted, “ Here, you wretches—why do you put the candles out—here—here—I’m dying ! ”

“ ‘ God’s peace be with you, sir !—The Lord have mercy on you ! ’—we groaned, like people distracted.

“ ‘ Ha, ha, ha !—D—n you !—D—n you all !—Dying—D—n me ! I won’t die !—I won’t die !—No—No !—D—n me—I won’t—won’t—won’t’——he gasped and made a noise as if he was choked. We looked. Yes, he was gone ! ”

He was interred in an obscure dissenting burying ground in the immediate neighbourhood, under the name of Hardy, for his family refused to recognise him.

So lived—so died, a “ man about town ; ” and so, alas ! will yet live and die many another MAN ABOUT TOWN !

NOTWITHSTANDING the scrupulous and anxious care with which the foregoing fearful narrative was prepared

for the public eye, so that a lively picture of the horrors of vice might be drawn, at the same time that a veil was thrown over the more ghastly and revolting features, in the particular instance,—the Editor regrets to state, that loud, and, in some instances, *angry* complaints have been made against it, in one or two influential and respectable quarters ; and in others, such atrocious misrepresentations of the author's design, accompanied by insulting, nay, beastly, insinuations, as have, he fears, succeeded in exciting suspicion and disgust in the minds of those who did not read the paper till *after* they read the cruel and lying character fixed upon it. All those with whom the Editor has conversed, have, without exception, declared they read the paper with feelings of simple unmitigated grief and agony—in the spirit aimed at by the writer. The Editor farther states, that the sketch had in its favour the suffrages of most of the leading prints in town and country, some of whom were pleased to express themselves in terms of such flattering eulogy, as even the writer of the Diary might consider extravagant. Three other such attacks were made upon it by London Journals, as sink their perpetrators beneath the desert of notice. Woe be to those polluted minds and degraded hearts, that could attach *such* meanings as would fain have been fastened on certain portions of “ the Man about Town ! ”

Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcunque infundis ACESCIT.

A word to those who may think its statements *exaggerated*: Would to Heaven that he who suspects as much, but once had been beside the frightful deathbed of Effingstone ! Talk of exaggeration !—that “ the experi-

ence of mankind does not, nor ever did, furnish such scenes!" * Why, the Editor knows of such a tale, as, if told, might make a devil to leap with horror in the fires!—one, that a man might listen to with quaking heart and creeping flesh, and prayers to God it might be forgotten!

In conclusion, the Editor knows well, that, despite the small cavillers above spoken of, this narrative has wrought the most satisfactory effects upon minds and hearts by themselves thought irreclaimably lost: good evidence of which lies now in his escrutoire, and may possibly be appended to some future edition of this work †. And he knows farther, that "The Man about Town" will *continue* long to be a beacon, warning off from guilt and ruin the "simple-hearted, the unwary, the beguiled." If there were nothing else in these volumes, the thought of writing "The Man about Town" would bring consolation to the deathbed of its writer, as having endeavoured to render lasting service to society.

* American paper.

† I am not at liberty to do so, yet.—ED. [3d ed.]

CHAPTER XIII.

DEATH AT THE TOILET.

“ ’Tis no use talking to me, mother, I *will* go to Mrs P——’s party to-night, if I die for it—that’s flat ! You know as well as I do, that Lieutenant N—— is to be there, and he’s going to leave town to-morrow—so up I go to dress.”

“ Charlotte, why will you be so obstinate ? You know how poorly you have been all the week ; and Dr —— says, late hours are the worst things in the world for you.”

“ Pshaw, mother ! nonsense, nonsense.”

“ Be persuaded for once, now, I beg ! Oh, dear, dear, what a night it is too—it pours with rain, and blows a perfect hurricane ! You’ll be wet, and catch cold, rely on it. Come now, won’t you stop and keep *me* company to-night ? That’s a good girl !”

“ Some other night will do as well for that, you know ; for now I’ll go to Mrs P——’s if it rains cats and dogs. So up—up—up I go !” singing jauntily

Oh, she shall dance all dress’d in white,
So ladylike.

Such were, very nearly, the words, and such the manner, in which Miss J—— expressed her determination to act in defiance of her mother's wishes and entreaties. She was the only child of her widowed mother, and had, but a few weeks before, completed her twenty-sixth year, with yet no other prospect before her than bleak single blessedness. A weaker, more frivolous, and conceited creature never breathed—the torment of her amiable parent, the nuisance of her acquaintance. Though her mother's circumstances were very straitened, suffering barely to enable them to maintain a footing in what is called the middling genteel class of society, this young woman contrived, by some means or other, to gratify her penchant for dress, and gadded about here, there, and every where, the most showily dressed person in the neighbourhood. Though far from being even pretty-faced, or having any pretensions to a good figure—for she both stooped and was skinny—she yet believed herself handsome; and by a vulgar, flippant forwardness of demeanour, especially when in mixed company, extorted such attentions, as persuaded her that others thought so.

For one or two years she had been an occasional patient of mine. The settled pallor—the tallowiness of her complexion, conjointly with other symptoms, evidenced the existence of a liver complaint; and the last visits I had paid her, were in consequence of frequent sensations of oppression and pain in the chest, which clearly indicated some organic disease of her heart. I saw enough to warrant me in warning her mother of the possibility of her daughter's sudden death from this cause, and the imminent peril to which she exposed herself by dancing, late hours, &c.; but Mrs ——'s remonstrances, gentle

and affectionate as they always were, were thrown away upon her headstrong daughter.

It was striking eight by the church clock, when Miss J——, humming the words of the song above mentioned, lit her chamber-candle by her mother's, and withdrew to her room to dress, soundly rating the servant-girl by the way, for not having starched some article or other which she intended to have worn that evening. As her toilet was usually a long and laborious business, it did not occasion much surprise to her mother, who was sitting by the fire in their little parlour, reading some book of devotion, that the church chimes announced the first quarter past nine o'clock, without her daughter's making her appearance. The noise she had made overhead, in walking to and fro to her drawers, dressing-table, &c. had ceased about half an hour ago, and her mother supposed she was then engaged at her glass, adjusting her hair, and preparing her complexion.

"Well, I wonder what can make Charlotte so very careful about her dress to-night!" exclaimed Mrs J——, removing her eyes from the book, and gazing thoughtfully at the fire; "Oh! it must be because young Lieutenant N—— is to be there. Well, I was young myself once, and it's very excusable in Charlotte—heigho!" She heard the wind howling so dismally without, that she drew together the coals of her brisk fire, and was laying down the poker, when the clock of —— church struck the second quarter after nine.

"Why, what in the world can Charlotte be doing all this while?" she again inquired. She listened—"I have not heard her moving for the last three quarters of an hour! I'll call the maid and ask." She rang the bell, and the servant appeared.

“ Betty, Miss J—— is not gone yet, is she ?”

“ La, no, ma’am,” replied the girl, “ I took up the curling irons only about a quarter of an hour ago, as she had put one of her curls out ; and she said she should soon be ready. She’s burst her new muslin dress behind, and that has put her into a way, ma’am.”

“ Go up to her room, then, Betty, and see if she wants any thing ; and tell her it’s half-past nine o’clock,” said Mrs J——. The servant accordingly went up stairs, and knocked at the bed-room door, once, twice, thrice, but received no answer. There was a dead silence, except when the wind shook the window. Could Miss J—— have fallen asleep ? Oh, impossible ! She knocked again, but unsuccessfully, as before. She became a little flustered ; and, after a moment’s pause, opened the door, and entered. There was Miss J—— sitting at the glass. “ Why, la, ma’am !” commenced Betty in a petulant tone, walking up to her, “ here have I been knocking for these five minutes, and”—— Betty staggered, horror-struck, to the bed, and uttering a loud shriek, alarmed Mrs J——, who instantly tottered up stairs, almost palsied with fright.—Miss J—— was dead !

I was there within a few minutes, for my house was not more than two streets distant. It was a stormy night in March : and the desolate aspect of things without—deserted streets—the dreary howling of the wind, and the incessant pattering of the rain, contributed to cast a gloom over my mind, when connected with the intelligence of the awful event that had summoned me out, which was deepened into horror by the spectacle I was doomed to witness. On reaching the house, I found Mrs J—— in violent hysterics, surrounded by

several of her neighbours, who had been called in to her assistance. I repaired instantly to the scene of death, and beheld what I shall never forget. The room was occupied by a white-curtained bed. There was but one window, and before it was a table, on which stood a looking-glass, hung with a little white drapery ; and various articles of the toilet lay scattered about—pins, brooches, curling-papers, ribands, gloves, &c. An arm-chair was drawn to this table, and in it sat Miss J——, stone dead. Her head rested upon her right hand, her elbow, supported by the table ; while her left hung down by her side, grasping a pair of curling irons. Each of her wrists were encircled by a showy gilt bracelet. She was dressed in a white muslin frock, with a little bordering of blonde. Her face was turned towards the glass, which, by the light of the expiring candle, reflected with frightful fidelity the clammy fixed features, daubed over with rouge and carmine—the fallen lower jaw—and the eyes directed full into the glass, with a cold, dull stare, that was appalling. On examining the countenance more narrowly, I thought I detected the traces of a smirk of conceit and self-complacency, which not even the palsyng touch of Death could wholly obliterate. The hair of the corpse, all smooth and glossy, was curled with elaborate precision ; and the skinny sallow neck was encircled with a string of glistening pearls. The ghastly visage of Death thus leering through the tinselry of fashion—the “ vain show” of artificial joy—was a horrible mockery of the fooleries of life !

Indeed, it was a most humiliating and shocking spectacle. Poor creature ! struck dead in the very act of sacrificing at the shrine of female vanity !—She must

have been dead for some time, perhaps for twenty minutes, or half an hour, when I arrived, for nearly all the animal heat had deserted the body, which was rapidly stiffening. I attempted, but in vain, to draw a little blood from the arm. Two or three women present proceeded to remove the corpse to the bed, for the purpose of laying it out. What strange passiveness! No resistance offered to them while straightening the bent right arm, and binding the jaws together with a faded white riband, which Miss J—— had destined for her waist that evening!

On examination of the body, we found that death had been occasioned by disease of the heart. Her life might have been protracted possibly for years, had she but taken my advice, and that of her mother. I have seen many hundreds of corpses, as well in the calm composure of natural death, as mangled and distorted by violence; but never have I seen so startling a satire upon human vanity, so repulsive, unsightly, and loathsome a spectacle, as a *corpse dressed for a ball!*

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TURNED HEAD.

HYPOCHONDRIASIS *, Janus-like, has two faces—a melancholy and a laughable one. The former, though oftener seen in actual life, does not present itself so frequently to the notice of the medical practitioner as the latter ; though, in point of fact, one as imperatively calls for his interference as the other. It may be safely asserted, that a permanently morbid mood of mind invariably indicates a disordered state of some part or other of the physical system ; and which of the two forms of hypochondria will manifest itself in a particular case, depends altogether upon the mental idiosyncrasy of the patient. Those of a dull, phlegmatic temperament, unstirred by intermixture and collision with the bustling activities of life, addicted to sombrous trains of reflection, and by a kind of sympathy, always looking on the gloomy side of things, generally sink, at some period or other of their lives, into the “ Slough of Despond”—as

* Arising, as its name imports, from disease in the *hypochondres* (ὕπὸ χόνδρως,) i. e. the viscera lying under the cartilage of the breast-bone and false ribs, the *liver*, *spleen*, &c.

old Bunyan significantly terms it—from whence they are seldom altogether extricated. Religious enthusiasts constitute by far the largest portion of those afflicted with this species of hypochondria—instance the wretched Cowper; and such I have never known entirely disabused of their dreadful fantasies. Those, again, of a gay and lively fancy, ardent temperament, and droll, grotesque appetencies, exhibit the laughable aspect of hypochondriasis. In such, you may expect conceits of the most astounding absurdity that could possibly take possession of the topsyturvied intellects of a confirmed lunatic; and persisted in with a pertinacity—a dogged defiance of evidence to the contrary—which is itself as exquisitely ludicrous, as distressing and provoking. There is generally preserved an amazing *consistency* in the delusion, in spite of the incessant rebuttals of sensation. In short, when once a erotchet, of such a sort as that hereafter mentioned, is fairly entertained in the fancy, the patient *will* not let it go! It is cases of this kind which baffle the adroitest medical tactician. For my own part, I have had to deal with several during the course of my practice, which if described coolly and faithfully on paper, would appear preposterously incredible to a non-professional reader. Such may possibly be the fate of the following. I have given it with a minuteness of detail, in several parts, which I think is warranted, by the interesting nature of the case, by the rarity of such narratives, and, above all, by the peculiar character and talents of the well-known individual who is the patient; and I am convinced that no one would laugh more heartily over it than himself—had he not long lain quiet in his grave!

You could scarcely look on N—— without laughing. There was a sorry sort of humorous expression in his odd and ugly features, which suggested to you the idea that he was always struggling to repel some joyous emotion or other, with painful effort. There was a rich light of intellect in his eye, which was dark and full ; you *felt* when its glance was settled upon you—and there it remained concentrated at the expense of all the other features ; for the clumsy ridge of eye-bone impending sullenly over his eyes—the Pitt-like nose, looking like a finger-and-thumb-full of dough drawn out from the pliant mass, with two ill-formed holes inserted in the bulbous extremity—and his large, liquorish, shapeless lips,—looked, altogether, any thing but refined or intellectual. He was a man of fortune—an obstinate bachelor—and educated at Cambridge, where he attained considerable distinction ; and at the period of his introduction to the reader, was in his thirty-eighth or fortieth year. If I were to mention his name, it would recall to the literary reader many excellent, and some admirable portions of literature, for the perusal of which he has to thank N——.

The prevailing complexion of his mind was sombrous ; but played on, occasionally, by an arch humorous fancy, flinging its rays of fun and drollery over the dark surface, like moonbeams on midnight waters. I do believe he considered it sinful to smile ! There was a puckering up of the corner of the mouth, and a forced corrugation of the eyebrows, the expression of which was set at nought by the comicality—the solemn drollery—of the eyes. You saw Momus leering out of every glance of them ! He said many very witty things in conversation, and had a knack of uttering the quaintest conceits

with something like a whine of compunction in his tone, which ensured him roars of laughter. As for his own laugh—when he *did* laugh—there is no describing it—short, sudden, unexpected was it, like a flash of powder in the dark. Not a trace of real merriment lingered on his features an instant after the noise had ceased. You began to doubt whether he had laughed at all, and to look about to see where the explosion came from. Except on such rare occasions of forgetfulness on his part, his demeanour was very calm and quiet. He loved to get a man who would come and sit with him all the evening, smoking, and sipping wine in cloudy silence. He could not endure bustle or obstreperousness; and when he did unfortunately fall foul of a son of noise, as soon as he had had “a sample of his quality,” he would abruptly rise and take his leave, saying, in a querulous tone, like that of a sick child, “I’ll go!” (probably these two words will at once recall him to the memory of more than one of my readers)—and he was as good as his word; for all his acquaintance—and I among the number—knew his eccentricities, and excused them.

Such was the man—at least as to the more prominent points of his character—whose chattering black servant presented himself hastily to my notice one morning, as I was standing on my door steps, pondering the probabilities of wet or fine for the day. He spoke in such a spluttering tone of trepidation, that it was some time before I could conjecture what was the matter. At length I distinguished something like the words, “Oh, Docta, Docta, com-a, and see-a a Massa! Com-a! Him so gashly—him so ill—ver dam bad—him say so—Oh, lorra-lorra-lorra! Come see-a a Massa—him ver orrid!”

"Why, what on earth is the matter with you, you sable, eh? Why can't you speak slower, and tell me plainly what's the matter?" said I impatiently, for he seemed inclined to gabble on in that strain for some minutes longer. "*What's* the matter with your master, sirrah, eh?" I inquired, jerking his striped morning jacket.

"Oh, Docta! Docta! com-a—Massa ver bad! Him say so!—Him head turned! Him head turned!"

"Him *what*, sirrah?" said I, in amazement.

"Him *head turned*, Docta—him head turned," replied the man, slapping his fingers against his forehead.

"Oh, I see how it is, I see; ah, yes," I replied, pointing to my forehead in turn, wishing him to see that I understood him to say his master had been seized with a fit of insanity.

"Iss, iss, Docta—him Massa *head turned*—him head turned! Dam bad!"

"Where is Mr N——, Nambo, eh?"

"Him lying all 'long in him bed, Massa—him dam bad. But him 'tickler quiet—him head turned"——

"Why, Nambo, what makes *you* say your master's head's turned, eh? What d'ye mean, sir?"

"Him, Massa, self say so—him did—him head turned. D—m!" I felt as much at a loss as ever; it was so odd for a gentleman to acknowledge to his Negro servant that his *head was turned*.

"Ah! he's gone *mad*, you mean, eh?—is that it? Hem! *Mad*—is it so?" said I, pointing, with a wink, to my forehead.

"No, no, Docta—him head turned!—him *head*," replied Nambo; and raising both his hands to his head, he

seemed trying to twist it round ! I could make nothing of his gesticulations, so I dismissed him, telling him to take word, that I should make his master's my first call. I may as well say, that I was on terms of friendly familiarity with Mr N——, and puzzled myself all the way I went, with attempting to conjecture what *new* crotchet he had taken into his odd, and latterly, I began to suspect, half-addled head. He had never disclosed symptoms of what is generally understood by the word hypochondriasis ; but I often thought there was not a likelier subject in the world for it. At length I found myself knocking at my friend's door, fully prepared for some specimen of amusing eccentricity—for the thought never crossed my mind, that he might be really ill. Nambo instantly answered my summons, and, in a twinkling, conducted me to his master's bed-room. It was partially darkened, but there was light enough for me to discern, that there was nothing unusual in his appearance. The bed was much tossed to be sure, as if with the restlessness of the recumbent, who lay on his back, with his head turned on one side, buried deep in the pillow, and his arms folded together outside the counterpane. His features certainly wore an air of exhaustion and dejection, and his eye settled on me with an alarmed expression from the moment that he perceived my entrance.

“ Oh, dear Doctor !—Isn't this frightful !—Isn't it a dreadful piece of business ? ”

“ Frightful !—dreadful business ! ” I repeated with much surprise. “ *What* is frightful ? Are you ill—have you had an accident, eh ? ”

“ Ah, ah !—you may well ask that ! ” he replied ; adding, after a pause, “ it took place this morning,—about two hours ago ! ”

“ You speak in parables, Mr N—— ! Why, what in the world is the matter with you ? ”

“ About two hours ago—yes,” he muttered, as if he had not heard me. “ Doctor, do tell me truly now, for the curiosity of the thing ; what did you think of me on first entering the room, eh ?—Feel inclined to laugh, or be shocked—which ? ”

“ Mr N——, I really have no time for trifling, as I am particularly busy to-day. Do, I beg, be a little more explicit ! Why have you sent for me ? *What* is the matter with you ? ”

“ Why, God bless me, Doctor ! ” he replied, with an air of angry surprise in his manner which I never saw before, “ I think, indeed, it’s *you* who are trifling ! Have you lost your eye-sight this morning ? Do you pretend to say that you do not see I have undergone one of the most extraordinary alterations in appearance that the body of man is capable of—such as never was heard or read of before ? ”

“ Once more, Mr N——,” I repeated, in a tone of calm astonishment, “ be so good as to be explicit. What are you raving about ? ”

“ Raving !—Egad, I think it’s *you* who are raving, Doctor ! ” he answered ; “ or you must wish to insult me ! Do you pretend to tell me you do not see that *my head is turned* ? ” and he looked me in the face steadily and sternly.

“ Ha, ha, ha ! Upon my honour, N——, I’ve been suspecting as much for this last five or ten minutes ! I don’t think a patient ever described his disease more accurately before ! ”

“ Don’t mock me, Doctor ——,” replied N——,

sternly. " 'Pon my soul, I can't bear it ! It's enough for me to endure the horrid sensations I do !"

" Mr N——, what *do* you"——

" Why, confound it, Doctor —— ! you'll drive me mad ! Can't you see that the back of my head is in front, and my face looking backwards ? Horrible !" I burst into loud laughter.

" Doctor ——, it's time for you and me to part—high time," said he, turning his face away from me. I'll let you know that I'll stand your nonsense no longer ! I called you in to give me your advice, not to sit grinning like a baboon by my bedside ! Once more—finally : Doctor ——, are you disposed to be serious and rational ? If you are not, my man shall show you to the door the moment you please." He said this in such a sober, earnest tone of indignation, that I saw he was fully prepared to carry his threat into execution. I determined, therefore, to humour him a little, shrewdly suspecting some temporary suspension of his sanity—not exactly *madness*—but at least some extraordinary hallucination. To adopt an expression which I have several times heard him use,—“ I saw what o'clock it was, and set my watch to the time.”

" Oh—well !—I see now how matters stand !—The fact is, I *did* observe the extraordinary posture of affairs you complain of, immediately I entered the room, but supposed you were joking with me, and twisting your head round in that odd way for the purpose of hoaxing me ; so I resolved to wait and see which of us could play our parts in the farce longest ! Why, good God ! how's all this, Mr N—— ?—Is it then *really* the case ?—Are you—in—in earnest—in having your head turned ?"

“ *In earnest, Doctor !*” replied Mr N——, in amazement. “ Why, do you suppose this happened by my own will and agency ?—Absurd !”

“ Oh, no, no—most assuredly not—it is a phenomenon—hem ! hem !—a phenomenon—not unfrequently attending on the *night-mare*,” I answered, with as good a grace as possible.

“ Pho, pho, Doctor !—Nonsense !—You must really think me a child, to try to mislead me with such stuff as that ! I tell you again, I am in as sober possession of my senses as ever I was in my life ; and, once more, I assure you, that, in truth and reality, my head is turned—literally so.”

“ Well, well !—So I see !—It is, indeed, a very extraordinary case—a very unusual one ; but I don’t, by any means, despair of bringing all things round again !—Pray tell me how this singular and afflicting accident happened to you ?”

“ Certainly,” said he, despondingly. “ Last night, or rather this morning, I dreamed that I had got to the West Indies—to Barbadoes—an island where I have, as you know, a little estate, left me by my uncle C—— ; and that a few moments after I had entered the plantation, for the purpose of seeing the slaves at work, there came a sudden hurricane, a more tremendous one than ever was known in those parts,—trees—canes—huts—all were swept before it ! Even the very ground on which we stood seemed whirled away beneath us ! I turned my head a moment to look at the direction in which things were going, when, in the very act of turning, the blast suddenly caught my head, and—oh, my God !—blew it completely round on my shoulders, till my face

looked quite—directly behind me—over my back! In vain did I almost wrench my head off my shoulders, in attempting to twist it round again; and what with horror, and—and—altogether—in short, I awoke—and found the frightful reality of my situation!—Oh, gracious Heaven!” continued Mr N——, clasping his hands, and looking upwards, “what have I done to deserve such a horrible visitation as this!”

Humph! it is quite clear what is the matter *here*, thought I; so assuming an air of becoming professional gravity, I felt his pulse, begged him to let me see his tongue, made many inquiries about his general health, and then proceeded to subject all parts of his neck to a most rigorous examination; before, behind, on each side, over every natural elevation and depression—if such the usual varieties of surface may be termed—did my fingers pass; he all the while sighing, and cursing his evil stars, and wondering how it was that he had not been killed by the “dislocation!” This little farce over, I continued silent for some moments, scarcely able, the while, to control my inclination to burst into fits of laughter, as if pondering the possibility of being able to devise some means of cure.

“Ah, thank God!”—said I, abruptly,—“I have it, I have it,——”

“What!—what—eh?—what is it?” he inquired with anxiety.

“I’ve thought of a remedy, which, if—if—if any thing in the world can bring it about, will set matters right again—will bring back your head to its former position.”

“Oh, God be praised!—Dear—dear Doctor!—if you do but succeed, I shall consider a thousand pounds but

the earnest of what I *will* do to evince my gratitude !” he exclaimed, squeezing my hand fervently. “ But I am not absolutely certain that we shall succeed,” said I cautiously. “ We will, however, give the medicine a twenty-four hours’ trial ; during all which time you must be in perfect repose, and consent to lie in utter darkness. Will you abide by my directions ?”

“ Oh, yes—yes—yes !—dear Doctor !—What *is* the inestimable remedy ? Tell me—tell me the name of my ransom. I’ll never divulge it—never !”

“ That is not consistent with my plans at present, Mr N——,” I replied, seriously ; “ but, if successful—of which I own I have *very* sanguine expectations—I pledge my honour to reveal the secret to you.”

“ Well—but—at least you’ll explain the nature of its operation—eh ? is it internal—external—what ?” The remedy, I told him, would be of both forms ; the latter, however, the more immediate agent of his recovery ; the former, preparatory—predisposing. I may tell the reader simply what my physic was to be : three *bread-pills* (the ordinary *placebo* in such cases) every hour ; a strong laudanum draught in the evening ; and a huge bread-and-water poultice for his neck, with which it was to be environed till the parts were sufficiently *mollified* to admit of the neck’s being twisted back again into its former position !—and, when that was the case—why—to ensure its permanency, he was to wear a broad band of strengthening plaster for a week !! This was the bright device, struck out by me—all at a heat ; and which explained to the poor victim, with the utmost solemnity and deliberation of manner—all the wise winks and knowing nods, and hesitating “ hems” and “ ha’s” of

professional usage—sufficed to inspire him with some confidence as to the result. I confess I shared the most confident expectations of success. A sound night's rest—hourly pill-taking—and the clammy saturating sensation about his neck, I fully believed would bring him, or rather his head, round : and, in the full anticipation of seeing him disabused of the ridiculous notion he had taken into his head, I promised to see him the first thing in the morning, and took my departure. After quitting the house, I could not help laughing immoderately at the recollection of the scene I had just witnessed ; and a Mrs M——, by the way—who happened to be passing on the other side of the street, and observed my involuntary risibility, took occasion to spread an ill-natured rumour, that I was in the habit of “ making myself merry at the expense of my patients !”

I foresaw, that should this “ crick in the neck” prove permanent, I stood a chance of listening to innumerable conceits of the most whimsical and paradoxical kind imaginable—for I knew N——’s natural turn to humour. It was inconceivable to me how such an extraordinary delusion could bear the blush of daylight, resist the evidence of his senses, and the unanimous simultaneous assurances of all who beheld him. Though it is little credit to me, and tells but small things for my self-control—I cannot help acknowledging, that at the bedside of my next patient, who was within two or three hours of her end, the surpassing absurdity of the “ turned head” notion glared in such ludicrous extremes before me, that I was near bursting a bloodvessel with endeavours to suppress a perfect peal of laughter !

About eleven o’clock the next morning, I paid N——

a second visit. The door was opened as usual by his black servant Nambo ; by whose demeanour I saw that something or other extraordinary awaited me. His sable swollen features, and dancing white eye-balls, showed that he was nearly bursting with laughter. " He—he—he !" he chuckled, in a sort of *sotto voce*, " him Massa head turned !—Him back in front ! Him waddle !—he—he—he !"—and he twitched his clothes—jerking his jacket and pointing to his breeches, in a way that I did not understand. On entering the room where N——, with one of his favourite silent smoking friends, (M——, the late well known counsel,) were sitting at breakfast, I encountered a spectacle which nearly made me expire with laughter. It is almost useless to attempt describing it on paper—yet I will try. Two gentlemen sat opposite each other at the breakfast table, by the fire : the one with his face to me was Mr M—— ; and N—— sat with his back towards the door by which I entered. A glance at the former sufficed to shew me, that he was sitting in tortures of suppressed risibility. He was quite red in the face—his features were swollen and puffy—and his eyes fixed strainingly on the fire, as though through fear of encountering the ludicrous figure of his friend. They were averted from the fire, for a moment, to welcome my entrance—and then re-directed thither with such a painful effort—such a comical air of compulsory seriousness—as, added to the preposterous fashion after which poor N—— had chosen to dress himself, completely overcame me. The thing was irresistible ; and my utterance of that peculiar choking sound, which indicates the most strenuous efforts to suppress one's risible emotions, was the unwitting signal for each of

us bursting into a long and loud shout of laughter. It was in vain that I bit my under lip, almost till it brought blood, and that my eyes strained till the sparks flashed from them, in the futile attempt to cease laughing ; for full before me sat the exciting cause of it, in the shape of N——, his head supported by the palm of his left hand, with his elbow propped against the side of the arm-chair. The knot of his neckerchief was tied, with its customary formal precision—but behind—at the nape of his neck ; his coat and waistcoat were buttoned down his back ; and his trowsers, moreover, to match the novel fashion, buttoned behind, and, of course, the hinder parts of them bulged out ridiculously in front ! Only to look at the coat-collar fitting under the chin, like a stiff military stock—the four tail buttons of brass glistening conspicuously before, and the front parts of the coat buttoned carefully over his back—the compulsory handiwork of poor Nambo !

N——, perfectly astounded at our successive shouts of laughter—for we found it impossible to stop—suddenly rose up in his chair, and, almost inarticulate with fury, demanded what we meant by such extraordinary behaviour. This fury, however, was all lost on *me* ; I could only point in an ecstasy of laughter, almost bordering on frenzy, to his novel mode of dress as my apology. He stamped his foot, uttered volleys of imprecations against us, and then ringing his bell, ordered the servant to show us both to the door. The most violent emotions, however, must in time expend their violence, though in the presence of the same exciting cause ; and so it was with Mr M—— and myself. On seeing how seriously affronted N—— was, we both sat down,

and I entered into examination, my whole frame aching with the prolonged convulsive fits of irrepressible laughter.

It would be in vain to attempt a recital of one of the drollest conversations in which I ever bore part. N——'s temper was thoroughly soured for some time. He declared that my physic was all a humbug, and a piece of quackery ; and the “ filthy *pudding* round his neck,” the absurdest farce he ever heard of : he had a great mind to make Nambo eat it, for the pains he had taken in making it and fastening it on—poor fellow !

Presently he lapsed into a melancholy reflective mood. He protested that the laws of locomotion were utterly inexplicable to him—a practical paradox ; that his volitions as to progressive and retrogressive motion neutralized each other ; and the necessary result was, a cursed circumgyratory motion—for all the world like that of a hen that had lost one of its wings ! That henceforward he should be compelled to crawl, crab-like, through life, all ways at once, and none in particular. He could not conceive, he said, which was the nearest way from one given point to another ; in short, that all his sensations and perceptions were disordered and confounded. His situation, he said, was an admirable commentary on the words of St Paul,—“ But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind.” He could not conceive how the arteries and veins of the neck could carry and return the blood, after being so shockingly twisted ; or “ how the wind-pipe went on” affording a free course to the air through its distorted passage. In short, he said, he was a walking lie !

Curious to ascertain the *consistency* of this anomalous

state of feeling, I endeavoured once more to bring his delusion to the test of simple sensation, by placing one hand on his nose, and the other on his breast, and asking him which was which, and whether both did not lie in the same direction. He wished to know why I persisted in making myself merry at his expense ! I repeated the question, still keeping my hands in the same position ; but he suddenly pushed them off, and asked me, with indignation, if I was not ashamed to keep his head looking over his shoulder in that way ; accompanying the words with a shake of the head, and a sigh of exhaustion, as if it had really been twisted round into the wrong direction. “ Ah ! ” he exclaimed, after a pause, “ if this unnatural state of affairs should prove permanent—hem ! —I’ll put an end to the chapter ! He, he, he !—He, he, he ! ” he continued, bursting suddenly into one of those short abrupt laughs, which I have before attempted to describe. “ He, he, he !—how *very* odd ! ” We both asked him, in surprise, what he meant, for his eyes were fixed on the fire in apparently a melancholy mood.

“ He, he, he !—exquisitely odd ! ” he continued, without answering us. “ He, he, he ! ” After repeated inquiries, he disclosed the occasion of his unusual cachinnations.

“ I’ve just been thinking,” said he, “ suppose—he, he, he !—suppose it were to come to pass that I should be *hanged*—he, he, he !—he, he, he !—God forbid, by the way—but, suppose I should, how old Ketch would be puzzled !—My face looking one way, and my tied hands and arms poking another ! How the crowd would stare ! He, he, he ! And suppose,” pursuing the train of thought, “ I were to be publicly whipped—how I could superin-

tend operations ! And again—how the devil am I to ride on horseback, eh ? with my face to the tail, or —— to the mane ? In short, what is to become of me ? I am, in effect, shut out from society ! I'm something else than a mere turn-coat !”

“ You have only to *walk circumspectly*,” said M—— with an air of solemn waggery—“and as for *back-bitters* —hem !”

“ That's odd—very—but impertinent,” replied the hypochondriac, with a mingled expression of chagrin and humour.

“ Come, come, N——, don't look so steadily on the dark side of things,” said I.

“ The *dark* side of things ?” he inquired ; “ I think it is the *back*-side of things I am compelled to look at !”

“ Look forward to better days,” said I.

“ *Look forward*, again ! What nonsense !” he replied, interrupting me ; “ impossible ! How can I *look forward* ? My life will henceforth be spent in wretched *retrospections* !” and he could not help smiling at the conceit. Having occasion, during the conversation, to use his pocket handkerchief, he suddenly reached his hand behind as usual, and was a little confused to find that the unusual position of his coat-pocket required that he should take it from before ! This I should have conceived enough to put an end to his delusion, but I was mistaken.

“ Ah ! it will take some time to reconcile me to this new order of things ; but practice—practice, makes perfect you know !” It was amazing to me, that his sensations, so contradictory to the absurd crotchet he had taken into his head, did not convince him of his error,

especially when so frequently compelled to act in obedience to long accustomed impulses. As, for instance, on my rising to go, he suddenly started from his chair, shook my hands, and accompanied me to the door, as if nothing had been the matter.

“ Well now ! What do you think of that ? ” said I triumphantly.

“ Ah, ah ! ” said he, after a puzzled pause, “ but you little know the effort it cost me ! ”

* * * * *

He did not persevere long in the absurd way of putting on his clothes which I have just described ; but, even after he had discontinued it, he alleged his opinion to be, that the front of his clothes ought to be with his face ! I might relate many similar absurdities springing from this notion of his turned head, but sufficient has been said already to give the reader a clear idea of the general character of such delusions. My subsequent interviews with him, while under this unprecedented hallucination, were similar to the two which I have attempted to describe. The fit lasted near a month. At length, however, I happened luckily to recollect a device successfully resorted to by a sagacious old English physician, in the case of a royal hypochondriac abroad, who fancied that his nose had swelled into greater dimensions than those of his whole body beside ; and forthwith resolved to adopt a similar method of cure with N——. *Electricity* was to be the wonder-working talisman ! I lectured him out of all opposition, silenced his scruples, and got him to fix an evening for the exorcisation of the evil spirit—as it might well be called—which had taken possession of him.

Let the reader fancy, then, N——'s sitting-room, about seven o'clock in the evening, illuminated with a cheerful fire, and four mould candles ; the awful electrifying machine duly disposed for action ; Mr S—— of —— Hospital, Dr ——, and myself, all standing round it, adjusting the jars, chains, &c. ; and Nambo busily engaged in laying bare his master's neck, N—— all the while eyeing our motions with excessive trepidation. I had infinite difficulty in getting his consent to one preliminary—the bandaging of his eyes. I succeeded, however, at last, in persuading him to undergo the operation blindfolded, by assuring him that it was essential to success ; for that if he was allowed to see the application of the conductor to the precise spot requisite, he might start, and occasion its apposition to a wrong place ! The *real* reason will be seen presently ; the great manœuvre could not have been practised but on such terms ; for how could I give his head a sudden twist round, and S—— give him a smart stroke on the crown of the head at the instant of his receiving the shock, if he saw what we were about ? I ought to have mentioned that we also prevailed upon him to sit with his arms pinioned, so that he was completely at our mercy. None of us could refrain from an occasional titter at the absurdity of the solemn farce we were playing—fortunately, however, unheard by N——. At length, Nambo being turned out, and the doors locked,—lest seeing the trick, he might disclose it subsequently to his master,—we commenced operations. S—— worked the machine—round, and round, and round, whizzing—sparkling—crackling—till the jar was moderately charged : it was then conveyed to N——'s neck, Dr —— using the conductor.

N——, on receiving a tolerably smart shock, started out of his chair, and I had not time to give him the twist I had intended. After a few moments, however, he protested that he felt “something loosened” about his neck, and was easily induced to submit to another shock considerably stronger than the former. The instant the rod was applied to his neck, I gave the head a sudden excruciating wrench towards the left shoulder, S—— striking him, at the same moment, a smart blow on the crown. Poor N——!

“Thank God!” we all exclaimed, as if panting for breath.

“I—i—s it all over?” stammered N—— faintly—quite confounded with the effects of the threefold remedy we had adopted.

“Yes—thank God, we have at last brought your head round again, and your face looks forward now as heretofore!” said I.

“Oh, remove the bandage—remove it! Let my own eyesight behold it!—Bring me a glass!”

“As soon as the proper bandages have been applied to your neck, Mr N——.”

“What, eh—a *second* pudding, eh?”

“No, merely a broad band of diachylum plaster, to prevent—hem—the contraction of the skin,” said I. As soon as that was done, we removed the handkerchiefs from his eyes and arms.

“Oh, my God, how delightful!” he exclaimed, rising and walking up to the mirror over the mantelpiece. “Ecstasy! All really right again——”

“My dear N——, do not, I beg, do not work your neck about in that way, or the most serious disarrangement of the—the parts,” said I——

“ Oh, it's so, is it ? Then I'd better get into bed at once, I think, and you'll call in the morning.”

I did, and found him in bed. “ Well, how does all go on this morning ?” I inquired.

“ Pretty well—middling,” he replied, with some embarrassment of manner. “ Do you know, Doctor, I've been thinking about it all night long—and I strongly suspect”—His serious air alarmed me—I began to fear that he had discovered the trick—“ I strongly suspect—hem—hem—” he continued.

“ *What ?*” I inquired, rather sheepishly.

“ Why, that it was my *brains* only that were turned—and—that—that—most ridiculous piece of business”—

“ Why, to be sure, Mr N——” * * *
and he was so ashamed about it, that he set off for the country immediately, and, among the glens and mountains of Scotland, endeavoured to forget ever having dreamed that his HEAD WAS TURNED.

One of the papers roundly asserts, that the foregoing is “ pure fiction.” I like the modesty and caution of this ; the more especially when I *know* it is next to impossible for the assertor to know any thing about the matter. But mark his reasoning :—

“ The conceit is droll and witty enough,” he says, “ but, unfortunately, is *too much so* for truth ! Who ever heard of such a *consistent* delusion—in such a *humorous* subject ?”

I leave this little argumentative chokepear for a child to nibble at : medical men know better. Samuel or Charles Wesley, (surviving relatives of the celebrated

John Wesley), fancied himself a TEA-POT, and stuck to the notion strongly for some time ! I know one whom he told of his “ misfortune.”

A medical man in Lincolnshire, a few years ago, persuaded himself into the notion that he had been transformed into a GREAT-COAT ! No one now laughs at the thing more heartily than himself ; at the same time, protesting that his delusion was complete at the time ! I have heard also, that the late Mr Nollekens fancied he had sunk into a *pair of shoes* ; and would ask people if they “ put him on,” to keep out of the *wet* as much as possible !

The gentleman with whom I was articled had the care of the workhouse ; and I saw there a woman who seriously told me she was *dead*, and had been so for many weeks. She was taking *tea* when she told me of the strange fact. “ Well, I think yours is a pretty comfortable sort of death,” said I ; but she replied with a sigh, “ It was *Satan* that had entered into her body the moment her own soul left it, and plagued her with eating, drinking, talking, and living without any of the pleasure and relish of true life !” The woman was a Roman Catholic ; and said she was suffering the pains of purgatory for a wicked life.

A metaphysical gentleman—once a member of Parliament—not many years ago imagined himself a SPIRIT—an impalpable, intangible being. He said he had the power of pervading matter, and knew the secret cause of its cohesion, having, in a manner, seen and known it while operating. He said he had a perfect knowledge of the “ *quomodo*,” as he called it, of the presence and operation of *gravity*. He was asked for an explanation

of the phenomena, and made an answer in a long tissue of metaphysic rignarole, unintelligible to any one that heard him. He said, that as for himself, he had the power of diffusing himself over the centre of our globe, and interfusing his influence throughout the whole congeries of matter, till the earth swelled to a thousand times its present dimensions. That *all* spirits had the same power!

“Why, mercy on us! Mr ——,” said Sir ——, with affected alarm, “we’re not *safe*, then! Perhaps the world is *swelling* under us now! What is to become of us?”

“Spirit is *benevolent* and wise, so you are safe!” replied the hypochondriac, with a most singular air, as if he *half* saw the absurdity of his notion, and was half angry with Sir ——. “You *might* cut your son’s throat—but you *don’t*!” During the same interview, he told his medical man that the “soul of Kant” wandered “through the universe;” and once diffused itself so extensively, as to render its *re-compression* very difficult! “If you only knew *how*, you could compress *me* into a compass infinitely less than that of a needle point,” said he, solemnly!

If the veracity of this instance should be seriously questioned, it is possible that the *ci-devant* hypochondriac himself might step for a moment from his elegant and profound privacy, where thought and imagination dwell “gloriously supreme,” and good-humouredly attest the truth of what I am relating. I have given the few amusing instances above, out of a store of many similar ones: and, reader, if you are extra-professional, and still a doubter, ask the most experienced medical friend you have, whether, in the above, you are required to put faith in improbabilities and figments.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WIFE.

Monday Evening, July 25, 18—.—Well ! the poor martyr has at last been released from her sufferings, and her wasted remains lie hid in the kindly gloom of the grave. Yes, sweet, abused, forgiving Mrs T—— ! I this morning attended your funeral, and let fall tears of unavailing regret ! Shall I tell your sad story all in one word or two ? The blow that broke your heart was struck by YOUR HUSBAND !

Heaven grant me calmness in recording your wrongs ! Let not the feelings of outraged humanity prompt me to “set down aught in malice.” May I be dispassionately enough disposed to say but the *half*, nay, even the hundredth part only, of what I know, and my conscience will stand acquitted ! Let not him who shall read these pages anticipate any thing of romance, of high-flown rhodomontade, in what follows. It is all about a poor, ill-used, heart-broken WIFE : and such an object is, alas ! too often met with in all classes of society, to attract, in an ordinary case, any thing of public notice. The ensuing narrative will not, however, be found an ordinary case. It is fraught with circumstances of such peculiar

aggravation, and exhibits such a moving picture of the tenderness and unrepining fortitude of woman, that I am tempted to give it at some length. Its general accuracy may be relied upon, for I succeeded in wringing it from the lips of the poor sufferer herself. I must, however, be allowed to give it in my own way ; though at the risk of its being thereby divested of much of that sorrowful simplicity and energy—that touching *naïveté* which characterised its utterance. I shall conclude with extracting some portions of my notes of visits made in a professional capacity.

Miss Jane C—— had as numerous a retinue of suitors as a pretty person, well-known sweetness of disposition, considerable accomplishments, and £ 10,000 in the funds, could not fail of procuring to their possessor. She was an orphan, and was left absolute mistress of her property on attaining her twenty-first year. All the members of her own family most strenuously backed the pretensions of the curate of the parish—a young man of ascertained respectability of character and family, with a snug stipend, and fair prospects of preferment. His person and manners were agreeable and engaging ; and he could not conceal his inclination to fling them both at Miss C——’s feet. All who knew the parties, said it would be an excellent match in all respects, and a happy couple they would make. Miss C—— herself could not look at the curate with indifference—at least if any inference might be drawn from an occasional flushing of her features at church, whenever the eyes of the clergyman happened to glance at her—which was much oftener than his duty required. In short, the motherly gossips of the place

all looked upon it as a settled thing, and had pitched upon an admirable house for the future couple. They owned unanimously that “the girl *might* have gone farther and fared worse” and so forth ; which is a great deal for such people to say about such matters.

There happened, however, to be given a great ball, by the lady of the ex-Mayor, where Miss C—— was one of the stars of the evening ; and at this party there chanced to be a young Londoner who had just come down on a three-weeks’ holyday. He was training for the law, in a solicitor’s office, and was within six or seven months of the expiration of his articles. He was a personable sort of fellow to look at—a spice of a dandy—and had that kind of air about him which tells *of town*—if not of the blandness, ease, and elegance of the West, still—*of town*—which contrasted favourably with the comparative ungainliness of provincials. He was, in a word, a sort of small star ; a triton among the minnows ; and whatever he said or did *took* infallibly. Apprized by some judicious relatives, of the united charms of Miss C——’s purse and person, he took care to pay her the most conspicuous attentions. Alas ! the quiet claims of the curate were soon silenced by his bustling rival. This young spark chattered Miss C—— out of her calm senses. Wherever she went, he followed ; whatever she said or did, he applauded. He put into requisition all his small acquirements—he sang a little, danced more, and talked an infinity. To be brief, he determined on carrying the fort with a *coup de main* ; and he succeeded. The poor curate was forgotten for ever ! Before the enterprising young lawyer left ——, he was an accepted suitor of Miss C——’s. The coldness of all her friends

and acquaintances signified nothing to her ; her lover had, by some means or other, obtained so powerful a hold of her affections, that sneers, reproaches, remonstrances, threats on the part of all who had previously betrothed her to the curate, “ passed by her as the idle wind, which she regarded not.” She promised to become his wife as soon as his articles should have expired, and to live in London.

In due time, as matters approached a crisis, friends were called in to talk over preliminaries. Mr T—— proved to be comparatively penniless ; but what was that ? Mis C—— acted with very unusual generosity. She insisted on settling only half her fortune—and left the other half entirely at his disposal. On receiving this intelligence from her own lips, the young man uttered the most frantic expressions of gratitude ; promised her eternal love and faithfulness ; protested that he idolized her ; and—*took her at her word*. It was in vain that cautious relatives stepped in to tender their remonstrances to Miss C—— on the imprudent extent to which she was placing her fortune beyond her own control. Opposition only consolidates and strengthens the resolutions of a woman whose mind is once made up. The generous creature believed implicitly every word that her lover poured into her delighted ear ; and was not startled into any thing like distrust, even when she found that her young husband had expended, at one fell swoop, nearly £3000 of the £5000 she had so imprudently placed at his disposal—in “ establishing themselves in London,” as he termed it. He commenced a rate of living which it would have required an income of at least £1000 a-year to support ; and when an uncle

of his wife's took upon him to represent to Mr T—— his ruinous extravagance—his profligate expenditure of his wife's funds, which all their mutual friends were lamenting and reprobating, he was treated with an insolence which for ever put an end to *his* interference, and effectually prevented that of any other party.

All, however, might yet have gone right, had Mr T—— paid but a moderate attention to his business ; for his father had the command of an excellent town connexion, which soon put enough into his son's hands to keep two clerks in regular employment.

It was not long before his wife was shocked by hearing her husband make incessant complaints of the drudgery of the office, though he did not devote, on an average, more than two or three hours a-day to it. He was always proposing some new party, some delightful drive, some enchanting excursion, to her, and she dared not refuse, for he had, already, once disclosed symptoms of a most imperious temper whenever his will was interfered with. She began to grow very uneasy, as she saw him drawing cheque after cheque on their banker, without once replacing a single sum ! Good God ! what was to become of them ? He complained of the tardy returns of business ; and yet he left it altogether to the management of two hired clerks ! He was beginning also to grow irregular in his habits ; repeatedly kept her waiting for hours, expecting his return to dinner in vain ; filled his table with frequent drafts from the gayest and most dissipated of his professional acquaintance, whose uproar, night after night, alarmed every one in the house, and disturbed even the neighbours. Then he took to billiard playing, and its invariable concomitants,—drink-

ing and late hours ; the theatres, frequented alone for the purpose—alas ! too notorious to escape even the chaste ears of his unfortunate and insulted wife—of mingling with the low wretches—the harpies—who frequent the slips and saloons ; then “ drinking bouts ” at taverns, and midnight “ larks,” in company with a set of vulgar, ignorant young coxcombs, who always left him to settle the reckoning.

He sent one of the clerks to his banker’s, one morning, with a cheque for £10 ; which proved to be the exact amount by which he had “ overdrawn ” his account—and worse—returned without the usual accommodation afforded. He was a little dismayed at finding such to be the state of things, and went up stairs to his wife to tell her, with a curse, of the “ meanness,” the “ d—d stinginess,” of Messrs —.

“ What ! Is it *all* spent, George ? ” she inquired in a gentle and faint tone of voice.

“ Every rap, by —, Jane ! ” was the reply. She turned pale, and trembled, while her husband, putting his hands in his pockets, walked sullenly to and fro about the parlour. With trembling hesitation, Mrs T—— alluded to the near approach of her confinement, and asked, almost inaudible with agitation, and the fear of offending him, whether he had made *any* provision for the necessary expenses attending it—had laid up *any thing*. He replied in the negative, in a very petulant tone. She could not refrain from shedding tears.

“ Your crying can’t mend matters,” said he, rudely, walking to the window, and humming the words of some popular air.

“ Dear, dear George ! have you seen any thing in my

conduct to displease you?" she inquired, wiping her eyes.

"Why do you ask me that, Mrs T——?" said he, walking slowly towards her, and eyeing her very sternly. She trembled, and had scarcely breath enough to answer, that she had feared such might have been the case, because he had become *rather* cool towards her of late.

"D'ye mean to say, ma'am, that I have used you ill, eh? Because if you do, it's a d——."

"Oh, no, no, George, I did not mean any thing of the kind; but—but—kiss me, and say you have forgiven me—do!" and she rose and stepped towards him with a forced smile. He gave her his cheek with an air of sullen indifference, and said, "It's no use blubbering about misfortunes, and all that sort of thing. The fact is, something, must be done, or ——, *I'm* done! Look here, Jane! Bring your chair there a minute! What do you say to these?" He pulled out of his pocket a crumpled mass of papers—bills which had been sent in during the week, some of them of several months' standing—£70 were due for wine and spirits; £90 for articles of his dress; £35 for the use of a horse and tilbury; £10 for cigars and snuffs; and, in short, the above are a sample of items which swelled into the gross amount of more than £300—all due—all from creditors who refused him longer credit, and all for articles which had ministered *nothing* to his poor wife's comforts or necessities. She burst into tears, as she looked over the bills scattered on the table, and flinging her arms round her husband's neck, implored him to pay more attention to business.

"I tell you I *do*," he replied, impatiently, suffering, not returning, her affectionate embrace.

“ Well, dearest George ! I don’t mean to blame you”——

“ You had better not, indeed !” he replied coldly ; “ but what’s to be done, eh ?—That’s what we ought to be considering. Do you think—hem !—Jane—Could you, do you think”—He paused, and seemed embarrassed.

“ Could I *what*, dear George ?” she inquired, squeezing his hands.

“ D’ye think—d’ye think—but—no—I’ll ask you some other day !” and he rose from his chair. What will be imagined was his request ?—She learnt some days afterwards, that it was for her to use her influence with her aunt, an old widow lady, to lend him £ 500. To return, however.

He was standing opposite the fire, in moody contemplation, when a rude puppy, dressed in the extreme of the fashion, with three different coloured waistcoats on—crossed and recrossed by a heavy pewter-looking chain—and a glossy new hat, with tapering crown, stuck with an impudent air on the left side of his head—burst unceremoniously into the parlour, and disturbed the sorrowful *tête-à-tête* of T—— and his wife, by rushing up to the former, shaking his hands, and exclaiming boisterously,—“ Ah ! T——how d’ye do, d—e ? Bill Bunce’s *Chaffer* has beat —— ; he has, by —— ! I’ve won £ 15 on it !—Oh, a thousand pardons, ma’am—I didn’t see you ; but there’s been a great dog-fight, you see, and I have been luckier than what Mr T—— here has, for I’ve won £ 15, and he has lost £ 20 !”

This scoundrel was one of T——’s bosom friends ! Ay, incredible as it may seem, it was for such worthless fellows, such despicable blockheads as these, that Mr

T——had squandered his generous wife's property, and forsaken her company! On the present occasion—a sample of what had occurred so often as to cause—no surprise—nothing, but a gush of bitter tears after he was gone—T—— civilly bade her good morning, departed arm-in-arm with his “friend,” and did not return till past two o'clock in the morning, almost dead drunk. Had he seen how the remainder of the day was spent by his poor wife—in tears and terror—unsoothed by the thought that her husband was absent on errands of honourable employment—content with making a scanty dinner of that at which the servant “turned up her nose,” as the phrase is—and sitting the rest of the evening sewing, and shedding tears by turns, till the hour of midnight warned her to retire to a sleepless bed; could he have felt the hurried beatings of her heart whenever her wakeful ear fancied she heard the sound of his approaching footsteps on the pavement beneath; could he have done this, he might not, *possibly*, on waking in the morning, have called her a ——, nor STRUCK HER on the mouth till her under-lip was half cut through, for presuming to rouse him before he had slept off the fumes of the brandy, and all he had drunk over night—in order that he might be in time for a consultation appointed for eleven o'clock. *He did do this*; and I was the first person on earth to whom she reluctantly told it—on her deathbed!

Though her delicate and interesting situation—within a very few weeks of her accouchement—might have kindled a spark of tenderness and pride in the bosom of any husband, who had not lost all the feelings of honour and manliness, it sufficed, apparently, to inspire T—— with

a determination to treat her more unkindly and neglectfully than ever. She scarcely ever saw him during the day ; and when he came home at night—more than once conducted by the watchman—he was almost invariably stupified with liquor ; and if he had the power of utterance, he seemed to take a demoniacal pleasure in venting upon her the foulest expressions which he could recollect being used by the riffraff of the taverns, where he spent his time. More than once was she so horrified with what he said, that, at the peril of her life, she insisted on leaving him, and sharing the bed of the servant girl ! Her wretched looks might have broken a heart of stone ; yet it affected not that of the wretch who called her his wife !

A few days after the occurrence above related, the maid-servant put a twopenny post letter into her mistress's hands ; and fortunate it was for Mrs T—— that the girl happened to be in the room while she read it, awaiting orders for dinner. The note was in these words, written in a feigned, but still a lady's hand :—

“ UNFORTUNATE MADAM !—I feel it my duty to acquaint you, that your husband, Mr T——, is pursuing quite disgraceful courses all night and day, squandering away his money among sharpers and blacklegs, and that he is persuaded to back one of the boxers in a great fight that is to be ; and above all, and what I blush to tell you—but it is fitting Mrs T—— should know it—in my opinion, Mr T—— is notoriously keeping a woman of infamous character, with whom he is constantly seen at the theatres and most other public places, and she passes as his *cousin*. Hoping that you will have prudence and spirit to act in this distressing business as be-

comes a lady and a wife, I am, madam, with the truest respect and sympathy,

“ A REAL FRIEND.”

Mrs T—— read this cruel letter in silence—motionless—and with a face that whitened sensibly as she proceeded ; till, at the disgraceful fact mentioned in the concluding part, she dropped the paper from her hands—and the servant ran to her in time to prevent her falling from her chair ; for she had swooned ! It was long before she came to ; and, when that was the case, it was only that she might be carried to her bed—and she was confined that evening. The child was still-born ! All this came on the husband like a thunder-stroke, and shocked him for a time into something like sobriety and compunction. The admirable qualities of his wife—her virtues and her meekness—shone before his startled eyes in angel hues. He forsook the scenes, a constant frequenting of which had rendered him unworthy to live under the same roof with her, and betook himself to the regular pursuits of business with great earnestness. He soon found out what arduous up-hill work it was to bring again under his control affairs which had been so long and shamefully neglected. He felt several times disposed to throw it all over in disgust ; for, alas ! he had lost almost every vestige of the patience and accuracy of business habits. He succeeded, with great difficulty, in appeasing the more clamorous of his creditors, and, in a word, once more stood a chance of clearing his way before him. His poor wife, however, was brought several times to the very verge of the grave, and was destined for months to the monotonous hours of a bed of sickness. For nearly a month, she experienced the

most affectionate attentions from her husband, that were consistent with a due attention to the business of his office. She felt revived and cheered by the prospect of his renewed attachment, and trusted in its permanency. But, alas ! her husband was not made of such materials as warranted her expectations ; he was little else than a compound of weakness, vanity, ignorance, and ill-temper ; and for such an one, the sober loveliness and attractiveness of domestic life had no charms. He had no sooner got his affairs a little into train, and succeeded in reviving the confidence of some of his principal clients, than he began to relax his efforts. One by one his old associates drew around him, and re-entangled him in the toils of dissipation. The first time that poor ill-fated Mrs T—— came down into the parlour to dinner, after a three months' absence in her sick chamber, she was doomed to dine alone—disappointed of the promised presence of her husband to welcome her—for the same low, contemptible coxcomb, formerly introduced to the reader as one of her husband's most intimate friends, had called in the course of the morning, and succeeded in enticing him away to a tavern-dinner with a “set of good 'uns,” who were afterwards to adjourn to one of the minor theatres. In vain was the little fillet of veal, ordered by her husband himself, placed on the table before his deserted wife ; she could not taste it, nor had strength enough to carve a piece for the nurse ! Mr T—— had had the grace to send her a note of apology, alleging that his absence was occasioned by “an affair of business !” This cruel and perfidious conduct, however, met with its due punishment. One of his principal creditors—his tailor—happened to be swallowing a hasty dinner in a box

adjoining the one in which T—— and his boisterous associates were dining, and accidentally cast eyes on his debtor T——. He saw and heard enough to fill him with fury ; for he heard his own name mentioned by the half-inebriated debtor, as one of the “ *served-out snips*” whom he intended to “do”—an annunciation which was received by the gentlemanly young men who were dining with him, with cries of “ Bravo, T——, do ! D—e, I—and I—and I—have done it before this !”

The next morning he was arrested for a debt of £110, at the suit of the very “ snip” whom he intended, in his own witty way, to “do,” and carried off to a spunging-house in Chancery Lane. There he lay for two days without his wife’s knowing any thing of the true state of things. He could get no one to stand bail for him, till one of his wife’s insulted friends, and his own brother-in-law, came forward reluctantly for that purpose, in order to calm her dreadful agitation, which had flung her again on a sick-bed. Her husband wrote her a most penitential letter from the spunging-house, imploring her forgiveness for his misconduct, and promising amendment. Again she believed him, and welcomed him home with enthusiastic demonstrations of fondness. He himself could not refrain from weeping ; he sobbed and cried like a child ; for his feelings—what with the most pungent sense of disgrace, remorse, and conscious unworthiness of the sweet creature, whose affections no misconduct of his seemed capable of alienating—were quite overcome. Three of his chief creditors commenced actions against him, and nothing seemed capable of arresting the ruin now impending over him. Where was he to find the means of satisfying their claims ? He was in despair,

and had sullenly and stupidly come to a resolution to let things take their course, when, as if Providence had determined to afford the miserable man one chance more of retrieving his circumstances, the sudden death of his father put him in possession of £ 800 in ready cash ; and this sum, added to £ 200 advanced him by two of his wife's friends, who could not resist her agonizing supplications, once more set matters to rights.

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Passing over an interval of four years, spent with disgrace to himself, and anguish to his wife, similar to that described above, they must now be presented to the reader occupying, alas ! a lower station of society. They had been compelled to relinquish an airy, respectable, and commodious residence, for a small, bad house, in a worse neighbourhood. His business had dwindled down to what was insufficient to occupy the time of one solitary clerk, whom he was scarcely able to pay regularly—and the more respectable of his friends had utterly deserted him in disgust. The most rigorous—nay, almost starving—economy, on the part of his wife, barely sufficed to “make both ends meet.” She abridged herself of almost every domestic comfort, of all those little elegancies, which a well-bred woman loves to keep about her, and did so without a murmur. The little income arising from the £ 5000, her settlement money, might surely of itself, with only ordinary prudence on his part, have enabled them to maintain their ground with something like respectability, especially if he had attended to what remained of his business. But, alas ! alas ! T——’s temper had by this time been thoroughly and permanently soured. He hated his good wife—his business—his fa-

mily—himself—every thing, except liquor and low company ! His features bore testimony to the sort of life he led—swelled, bloated, and his eyes languid and blood-shot. Mrs T—— saw less of him than ever ; for not far from his house there was a small tavern, frequented by none but the meanest underlings of his profession ; and there was T—— to be found, evening after evening, smoking and drinking himself into a state of stupid insensibility, till he would return home redolent of the insufferable stench and fumes of tobacco smoke, and brandy and water ! In the day time, he was often to be found for hours together at an adjoining billiard-room, where he sometimes lost sums of money, which his poor wife was obliged to make up for by parting, one by one, with her little trinkets and jewellery ! What could have infatuated him to pursue such a line of conduct ? it may be asked,—why, as if of set purpose, ruin the peace of mind of one of the fondest and most amiable wives that ever man was blessed with ? A vulgar, but forcible expression, may explain all,—it was “ the nature of the beast.” He had no intellectual pleasures—no taste for the quiet enjoyments of home ; and had, above all, in his wife, too sweet, confiding, and unresisting a creature ! Had she proved a termagant, the aspect of things might have been very different ; *she* might have *bullied* him into something like a sense of propriety. Here, however, he had it all his own way—a poor creature, who allowed him to break her heart without remonstrance or reproach ; for the first she *dared* not—the second she could not. It would have broken a heart of stone to see her ! She was wasted to a skeleton, and in such a weak, declining state of health, that she could scarcely stir out of

doors. Her appetite was almost entirely gone ; her spirits all fled long ago !—Now, shall I tell the reader *one* immediate cause of such physical exhaustion ! I will, and truly.

Mr T—— had still a tolerable share of business ; but he could scarcely be brought to give more than two hours' attendance in his office a-day, and sometimes not even that. He therefore imprudently left almost every thing to the management of his clerk, a worthy young man, but wholly incompetent to such a charge. He had extorted from even his idle and unworthy master frequent acknowledgments of his obligations for the punctuality with which he transacted all that was intrusted to him, and in particular, for the neatness, accuracy, and celerity with which he copied drafts of pleadings, leases, agreements, &c. His master often hiccoughed to him his astonishment at the rapidity with which he “turned them out of hand ;” but how little did the unworthy fellow imagine that, in saying all this, he was uttering, not his clerk's, but his WIFE's praises ! For *she* it was, poor creature ! who, having taken the pains to learn a lawyer's hand, engrossing, &c. from the clerk, actually sat up, almost regularly, till two or three o'clock in the morning, plodding perseveringly through papers and parchments—making long and laborious extracts—engrossing settlements, indentures, &c., and copying pleadings, till her wearied eyes and her little hands could no longer perform their office ! I could at this moment lay my hands on a certain legal instrument, of tiresome prolixity, which was engrossed, every word, by Mrs T—— !

This was the way in which his wife spent the hours of midnight, and to enable him to squander away his

time and money in the unworthy, the infamous manner above related!

Was it wonderful that her health and spirits were wholly borne down by the pressure of so many accumulated ills? Had not her husband's eye been dulled, and his perceptions deadened, by the perpetual stupors of intoxication, he might have discerned the hectic flush—the coming fever—the blood-spitting, which foretell consumption! But that was too much to be expected. As for the evenings—they were invariably spent at his favourite tavern, sitting hour after hour among its lowest frequenters; and as for her night-cough and blood-spitting, he was lulled by liquor into too profound a repose, to be roused by the sounds which were, in effect, his martyred wife's death-knell! If, during the day-time, he was in a manner forced to remark her languor—her drooping spirits—the only notice, the only sympathy it called forth on his part, was a cold and careless inquiry, why she did not call in a medical man! I shall conclude this portion of my narrative, with barely reciting four instances of that conduct on the part of Mrs T——'s husband, which at last succeeded in breaking her heart, and which, with many other similar ones, were communicated to me with tears of tortured sensibility.

I. Half drunk, half sober, he one evening introduced to her, at tea, a female "friend," whose questionable appearance might, at first sight, have justified his wife's refusal to receive her. Her conversation soon disclosed her real character; and the insulted wife abruptly retired from the room that was polluted by the presence of the infamous creature, whom he avowed to be *his mistress*! He sprung after her to the door, for the purpose of drag-

ging her back ; but her sudden paleness, and the faint tones in which she whispered,—“ Don’t stop me—don’t—or I shall die !” so shocked him, that he allowed her to retire, and immediately dismissed the wretch, whom he could have brought thither for no other purpose than to insult his wife ! Poor creature ! did a portion of her midnight earnings go towards the support of the wretch who was kept by her husband ?

II. Having occasion, late one evening, to rummage among her husband’s office papers, in search of something which was to be engrossed that night, her eye happened to light on a document, with a pencil superscription—“ *Copy, case for counsel, concerning Mrs T——’s marriage settlement.*” A very excusable curiosity prompted her to peruse what proved to be a series of queries submitted to counsel on the following points, among others :—What present powers he had under her marriage settlement ?—whether her own interest in it could be legally made over to another, with her consent, during her lifetime ? and, if so, how ?—whether or not he could part with the reversion, provided she did not exercise her power of willing it away elsewhere ?—From all this, was it possible for her not to see how heartlessly he was calculating on the best method of obtaining possession of the remnant of her fortune ?

“ Oh, cruel—cruel—cruel George ! So impatient !—Could you not wait a month or two ? I’m sure I shall not keep you out of it long ! I always intended to leave it to you, and I won’t let this alter my mind, though it is cruel of you !” sobbed Mrs T——, till her heart seemed breaking. At that moment she heard her husband’s loud obstreperous knock at the door, and hastily

crumpling up the paper into the drawer of the desk from which she had taken it, she put out the candle, and leaving her midnight labours, flew up stairs to bed—to a wretched and sleepless one !

III. Mrs T——'s child, which was about three years and a-half old, was suddenly seized with convulsive fits, as she was one evening undressing it for bed. Fit after fit followed in such rapid succession, that the medical man who was summoned in prepared her to expect the worst. The distraction of her feelings may be easier conceived than described, as she held on her knee the little creature on whose life were centred all the proud and fond feelings of a mother's love, deepened into exclusive intensity ; for it seemed the only object on earth to return her love ;—as she held it, I say, but with great difficulty, for its tiny limbs were struggling and plunging about in a dreadful manner. And then the frightful rolling of the eyes ! They were endeavouring to pour a tea-spoonful of Dalby's carminative, or some such medicine, through the closed teeth, when the room door was suddenly thrown open, and in reeled Mr T——, more than half-seas over with liquor, and in a merrier mood than usual, for he had been successful at billiards ! He had entered unobserved through the street door, which had been left ajar by the distracted servant girl, and hearing a bustle in the room, he had entered, for the purpose of seeing what was the matter.

“ Wh—wh—what is the matter, good fo—olks, eh ? ” he stammered, reeling towards where Mrs T—— was sitting, almost fainting with terror at seeing the frightful contortions of her infant's countenance. She saw him not, for her eyes were fixed in agony on the features of her suffering babe.

“What the—the—the d—l is the matter with all of you here, eh?” he inquired, chucking the servant girl under the chin, who, much agitated, and shedding tears, had approached to beg he would leave the room. He tried to kiss her, and in the presence of the medical man—who sternly rebuked him for his monstrous conduct.

“D—n you, sir—who the d—l are *you*?” he said, putting his arms a-kimbo—“I *will* know what’s the matter!” He came near—he saw all!—the leaden-hued, quivering features, the limbs now rigid—then struggling violently—the starting eyeballs.

“Why, for God’s sake, what’s the matter, eh?” he stammered, almost inaudibly, while the colour fled from his face, and the perspiration started upon his forehead. He strove to steady himself, but that was impossible. He had drunk too deeply.

“What are you doing to the child—what—what?” he again inquired, in a feeble and faltering voice, interrupted by a hiccough. No notice whatever was taken of him by his wife, who did not seem to see or hear him.—“Jane, tell me,” addressing her again, “has the child had”—hickup—“an—an ac—ci—dent?” The infant that moment gave a sudden and final plunge; and Mrs T——’s faint shriek, and the servant girl’s wringing of the hands, announced that all was over! The little thing lay dead in the arms of its mother.

“Sir, your child is dead,” said the apothecary, sternly, shaking Mr T—— by the arm—for he stood gazing on the scene with a sullen, vacant stare, scarcely able to steady himself.

“Wh—wh—at! D—e—a—d?” he muttered, with a ghastly air.

“Oh, George, my darling is—is dead!” groaned the

afflicted mother, for the first time looking at and addressing her husband. The word seemed to sober him in an instant.

“What!—Dead. And I DRUNK!”

The medical man, who stood by, told me he could never forget the scene of that evening! When Mrs T—— discovered, by his manner, his disgraceful condition, she was so utterly overcome with her feelings of mingled grief, shame, and horror, that she fell into violent hysterics, which lasted almost all night long. As for T——, he seemed palsied all the next day. He sat alone during the whole of the morning, in the room where the dead infant lay, gazing upon it with emotions which may be imagined, but not described.

IV. Almost the only piece of ornamental furniture, her last remaining means of amusement and consolation, was her piano. She played with both taste and feeling, and many a time contrived to make sweet sounds pour an oblivious charm over her sorrows and sufferings, by wandering over the airs which she had loved in happier days. Thus was she engaged one afternoon with one of Dr Arne’s exquisite compositions, the air beginning, “Blow, blow, thou winter’s wind.” She made several attempts to accompany the music with her voice—for she once had a very sweet one, and *could* sing—but, whenever she attempted, the words seemed to choke her. There was a sorrowful appropriateness in them, a touching echo of her own feelings, which dissolved her very spirit within her. Her only child had died, as the reader was informed, about six months before, and her husband had resumed his ill courses, becoming more and more stern and sullen in his demeanour—more unrea-

sonable in his requirements. The words of the air, as may be easily conceived, were painfully appropriate to her situation, and she could not help shedding tears. At that moment her husband entered the room with his hat on, and stood for some moments before the fire in silence.

"Mrs T——!" said he, as soon as she had concluded the last stanza.

"Well, George!" said she, in a mild tone.

"I—I must *sell that piano*, ma'am—I must!" said he.

"What!" exclaimed his wife, in a low whisper, turning round on the music stool, and looking him in the face with an air of sorrowful surprise. "Oh, you cannot be in earnest, George!"

"'Pon my life, ma'am, but I am—I can't indulge you with superfluities while we can hardly afford the means of keeping body and soul together."

"George—dear George—do forgive me, but I—I—I *cannot* part with my poor piano," said she.

"Why not, ma'am, when *I* say you *MUST*?"

"Oh, because it was the gift of my poor mother!" she replied, bursting into tears.

"Can't help that, ma'am—not I. It must go. I hate to hear its cursed noise in the house—it makes me melancholy—it does, ma'am—you're always playing such gloomy music," replied her husband, in a severe and less decisive tone.

"Well, well! if that's all, I'll play any thing you like—only tell me, dear George! what shall I play for you now?" said she, rising from the music stool and approaching him.

"Play a farewell to the piano, for it *must* go, and it shall!" he replied, desperately.

“ Dear, kind George ! let me keep it a little longer,” said she, looking him beseechingly in the face—“ a little—a *little* longer”——

“ Well, ma’am, sit down and play away till I come in again, any thing you like.”

He left the room ; and in less than half an hour—oh, hardness of heart unheard of!—returned with a stranger, who proved to be a furniture broker, come to value the instrument ! That evening it was sold to him for £15 ; and it was carried away the first thing in the morning, before his wife came down stairs ! What will be supposed the occasion of this cruelty ? It was to furnish Mr T—— with money to pay a bill of the infamous creature more than once alluded to, and who had obtained a complete ascendancy over him !

It was a long continued course of such treatment as this, that called *me* upon the scene, in a professional capacity, merely, at first ; till the mournful countenance of my patient inspired me with feelings of concern and friendly sympathy, which eventually led to an entire confidence. She came to me in the unostentatious character of a morning patient, in a hackney coach, with an elderly female friend. She looked quite the lady, though her dress was of but an ordinary quality, yet exquisitely neat and clean ; and she had still a very interesting and somewhat pretty face, though long continued sorrow had made sad havoc with her features ! These visits, at intervals of a week, she paid me, and compelled me to take my fee of one guinea, on each occasion—though I would have given *two* to be enabled to decline it without hurting her delicacy. Though her general health had suffered severely, still I thought that matters had not gone

quite so far as to destroy all hopes of recovery, with due attention ; though her cheeks disclosed, almost every evening, the death-rose—the grave-flower—of hectic, and night-sweats, and a faint cough, were painfully regular in their recurrence,—still I saw nothing, for a long time, to warrant me in warning her of serious danger. I insisted on her allowing me to visit her at her own house, and she at last permitted me, on condition that I would receive at least half-a-guinea,—poor creature!—for every visit. That, however, I soon dropped ; and I saw her almost every day gratuitously, whenever any temporary aggravations of her symptoms required my attendance. The first time I saw her husband, I could not help taking a prejudice against him, though she had never breathed a syllable to me of his ill conduct. He was apparently about forty years old, though his real age was not more than two or three-and-thirty. His manners and habits had left a sufficiently strong impress upon him to enable a casual beholder to form a shrewd conjecture as to his character. His features, once rather handsome than otherwise, were now reddened and swollen with long continued excess ; and there was altogether an air of truculence—of vulgar assurance and stupid sullenness, about him, which prepossessed me strongly against him. When, long afterwards, Mrs T—— gave me that description of his appearance and manners under which he is first placed before the reader of this narrative, I could not help frequently interrupting her with expressions of incredulity, and reminding her of his present ill-favoured looks ; but as she went on with her sad story, my scepticism vanished. Personal deterioration was no incredible attendant on moral declension ! * * *

March 28. 18—.—There can be no longer any doubt as to the nature of Mrs T——'s symptoms. She is the destined victim of consumption. The oftener I go to her house, the stronger are my suspicions that she is an unhappy woman, and that her husband ill-uses her. I have many times tried to hint my suspicions to her, but she will declare nothing. She *will* not understand me. Her settled despondency, however, accompanied with an under current of feverish nervous trepidation, which she cannot satisfactorily explain, convinces me something or other is wrong. I see very little of her husband, for he is scarcely ever in her company when I call. Though his profession is that of an attorney, and his house and office are one, I see scarcely any indications of business stirring. I am afraid they are in sinking circumstances. I am *sure* that she, at least, was born and bred for a station superior to that she now occupies. Her manners have that simplicity, ease, and elegance, which tell of a higher rank in society. I often detect her alone in tears, over a low fire. In a word, I am sure she is wretched, and that her husband is the cause of it. That he keeps late hours, I *know*—for she happened to let slip as much one day to me, when I was making inquiries about the time of her retiring to sleep. I feel a great interest in her; for, whenever I see her, she reminds me of “Patience on a monument, smiling at Grief,”—of

“Sorrow deck'd

In the poor faded garb of tarnish'd joy,
Ill fitting to her wasted form.”

April 5th.—To-day I found them both together—sitting one on each side of the fireplace, he smoking—in the parlour,—and she, with a little needlework in her

lap. I thought he seemed somewhat embarrassed at my entrance ; which probably had put an end to some scene of unpleasantness, for her face was suffused with crimson. *It* soon retired, however, and left the wanness to which I had been accustomed in her.

“ So, my wife’s ill, sir, it seems ?” said Mr T——, abruptly, putting his pipe on the hob.

“ I’m sorry to say she *is*, Mr T——,” I replied, “ and that she is worse to-day than she has been for some time.”

Mrs T—— let fall tears.

“ Sorry to hear you say so, Doctor ; I’ve just been telling her it’s all owing to her own *obstinacy* in not calling earlier on ——.”

“ I think you might have used a milder word, sir,” said I, with involuntary sternness, at the same time directing my attention exclusively to his wife—as if for the purpose of hinting the propriety of his retiring.

“ What’s the matter with her, sir ?” he inquired, in a more respectful tone than he had hitherto assumed.

“ General debility, sir, and occasional pain,” said I, coldly.

“ What’s it owing to ?”

I looked suddenly at Mrs T—— : our eyes met—and hers had an expression of apprehension. I determined, however, to give a hint that I suspected all was not right, and replied—“ I fear she does not take suitable nourishment—keeps irregular hours—and has something or other on her mind which harasses her.” The latter words I accompanied with a steady look into his face. He seemed a little flushed.

“ You’re mistaken, sir,” said he, with a *brusque* air, “ she may eat what she likes—that I can afford,—may

go to bed at what hour she likes,—and it's all her own fault that she will sit moping over the fire night after night, and week after week—waiting for my return—till two or three o'clock in the morning”——

“ *That* is, of itself, sufficient to account for her illness,” said I, pointedly. He began to lose his temper, for he saw the shameful acknowledgment he had unwittingly made. “ Pray, Mrs T——,” he inquired, looking angrily at his wife, who sat pale and trembling by my side,—“ *Have* you any thing on your mind—eh? If so—why—speak out—no sneaking?”

“ No !” she stammered ; “ and I never said I had—I assure you.—Did I ever give you even the most distant hint of the kind, Doctor ?” she continued, appealing to me.

“ By no means, madam,—not in the slightest, on any occasion,” I replied ; “ it was only a conjecture—a suspicion of my own.” I thought he looked as if he would have made some instant reply, for his eye glared furiously on me. He bit his lips, however, and continued silent. His conscience “ pricked him.” I began to feel uneasy about the future quiet of Mrs T——, lest any observations of mine should have excited her husband's suspicions that she had made disclosures to me of family matters.

“ What would you advise for her, sir ?” he asked coldly.

“ Removal, for a few weeks, to the sea-side—a liberal diet—and lively society.”

“ Very well, sir,” said he, after a puzzled pause ; “ Very good, sir—very ; it shall be attended to. Perhaps you want to be alone—eh?—So I'll leave you !”

and directing a peculiar look towards his wife, as if warning her against something or other, he left the room. She burst into tears directly he was gone.

“ My dear madam, forgive me for saying that I suspect your husband’s behaviour towards you is somewhat harsh, and, perhaps, *unkind*,” said I, in as soothing a tone as I could command, and pressing her hand kindly into mine.

“ Oh, no, Doctor,—no !” she replied, adding abruptly, in an altered manner, indicating displeasure, “ What makes you think so, sir ?”

“ Why, madam, simply because I cannot shut my eyes or my ears to what passes even while I am here ; as for instance, only just now, madam—just now.”

She sighed, and made me no reply. I told her I was in earnest in recommending the course I had mentioned to her husband.

“ Oh, dear, Doctor, no, no !—we could not afford it,” said she, with a sigh. At that moment her husband returned, and resumed his former seat in sullen silence. I soon after took my departure.

April 7th.—Does not the following make one blush for one’s species ?—I give it nearly as I received it from the lips of Mrs T——. Inestimable woman ! why are you fated to endure such pangs ?

About twelve o’clock at noon, hearing her husband come in, and thinking from his looks, of which she caught a casual and hasty glance through the window, that he was fatigued, and stood in need of some refreshment, she poured out a glass of port wine, almost the last in a solitary bottle which she had purchased, under my directions, for medicinal purposes, and, with a biscuit, brought

it herself down stairs—though the effort so exhausted her feeble frame, that she was obliged to sit down for several moments on the last stair to recover her breath. At last, she ventured to knock at the door of the back-office where he was sitting, holding the little waiter with the glass of wine and the biscuit in her left hand.

“Who’s there?” inquired the gruff voice of T——.

“It’s only I, my dear. May I come in, please?” replied the gentle voice of his wife.

“What brings *you* here, eh?—What the d—l do you want with me now?” said he, surlily.

“I’ve brought you something, my dear,” she replied, and ventured to open the door. T—— was sitting before some papers or parchments, alone, and his countenance showed that he was in a worse humour than usual. On seeing her errand, he suddenly rose from his chair, exclaiming, in an angry tone,—“What the —— brings you here in this way, plaguing me while engaged at business, you ——!—Eh, woman?” and, oh, my God! in a sudden fit of fury, he struck the waiter, wine, biscuit and all, out of her trembling hands to the floor, rudely pushed her out of the room, and slammed the door violently in her face. He did not re-open it, though he could not but have heard her fall upon the floor, the shock was so sudden and violent.

There, stretched across the mat, at the bottom of the staircase, lay that suffering creature, unable to rise, ‘till her stifled sobbings brought the servant girl to her assistance.

“I can’t help saying it’s most abominable usage of you, ma’am; it is—and I don’t care if master hears me say so neither,” said the girl, herself crying; “for I’m

sure he isn't worthy of the very shoes you wear—he isn't." She was endeavouring to lift her mistress, when Mrs T—— suddenly burst into a loud, unnatural laugh, and went off into violent hysterics. Mr T——, hearing the noise of talking and laughing, sprung to the door, threw it open, and shouted to them to be "off with their noise—disturbing business!" but the piteous spectacle of his prostrate wife stopped him; and, almost petrified with horror, he knelt down for the purpose of assisting her all he could. * * *

About an hour after this occurrence, I happened to call, and found her lying in bed, alone, her husband having left her on business. When the servant told me—and her mistress reluctantly corroborated what she said—the circumstances above related, I felt such indignation swelling my whole frame, that, had he been within reach, I could not have resisted caning the scoundrel within an inch of his unworthy life! The recollection of this occurrence tortures me even now, and I can hardly believe that such brutality as T——'s could have been shown by man!

Mrs T—— kept her room from that hour, and never left it, till she was carried out for burial! But this is anticipating.

April 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th.—I see clearly that poor Mrs T—— will never rise from her bed again. She has drained the bitter cup of grief to the dregs! She is one of the meekest sufferers I ever had for a patient. She says little to me, or to any one; and shows a regard—a love for her unworthy husband, which, I think, can be called by no other name than absolute infatuation. I have never yet heard her breathe a hint to his disadvan-

tage. He is not much with her ; and from what little I have seen, I feel convinced that his eyes are opening to a sense of the flagrant iniquity of his past conduct. And what are the effects produced by his feelings of shame and remorse ? He endeavours to forget all in the continual stupor induced by liquor !

April 12th.—Mrs T—— delirious. Raved while I was there about her child—convulsions—said something about “ cruel of Mr T—— to be drunk while his child lay dying ;” and said many other things which shocked me unutterably, and convinced me that her primary disorder—was a broken heart. I am sure she must have endured a series of brutal usage from her husband.

—— *13th.*—The whole house upside down—in disorder and confusion from the top to the bottom—for there is an *execution* in it, and the officers and an appraiser are making an inventory of the furniture,—poor, poor Mrs T—— lying all the while on her deathbed ! The servant told me afterwards, that her mistress, hearing strange steps and voices, called to know what was the cause ; and, on receiving word of the real state of matters, lifted up her hands, burst into an agony of weeping, and prayed that the Almighty would be pleased to remove her from such a scene of wretchedness. T—— himself, I learnt, was sitting cowering over the kitchen-fire, crying like a child ! Brute ! coward ! fool !

Such was the state of things at the time of my arrival. I was inconceivably shocked, and hurried to Mrs T——’s room, with unusual haste and trepidation. I found her in tears—sobbing, and exclaiming, “ Why won’t they let us rest a little ! why strip the house before I am gone ? can they not wait a little ? where, where is Mr T—— ?”

I could not for several minutes speak myself, for tears. At length I succeeded in allaying her excitement and agitation. At her request, I sent for the appraiser into her room. He came, and seemed a respectable and feeling man.

“Are you bent upon stripping the house, sir, while this lady is lying in her present dangerous state?”

“Indeed, sir, indeed, sir,” replied the man, with considerable emotion,—“I’m sorry for it—very; but it is my duty—duty—ordered”—he continued, confusedly; “If I had my own way, sir”——

“But at least you need not approach this chamber, sir,” said I, rather sternly. He stammered something like the words, “obliged—sorry—court of law,” &c. Mrs T—— again burst into an agony of tears.

“Retire, sir, for the present,” said I, in an authoritative tone, “and we will send for you soon.” I then entered into conversation with my poor persecuted patient, and she told me of the £5000 settled to her separate use, and which she intended, under a power in the deed of settlement, to will to her husband. I spontaneously promised to stand security for the satisfaction of the execution, provided the creditors would defer proceedings for three months. She blessed me for it!—This, however, I afterwards learned, would be illegal, at least so I was told; and I therefore wrote a cheque on my banker for the amount awarded by the court, and thus put an end to distress from that quarter. At Mrs T——’s urgent request, I returned to her bedside that evening. I found a table, with writing materials placed before a chair, in which she begged me to be seated. She then dictated to me her will—in which, after deducting

the sum I had advanced in satisfaction of the execution, and leaving me, in addition, sufficient to purchase a plain mourning ring, she bequeathed the whole, absolutely and unreservedly, to her husband; and added, my hand shaking while I wrote it down, "hoping that he will use it prudently, and not entirely forget me when I am gone. And if he should—if he should"—her utterance was choked—"and if he should—*marry again*"—again she paused.

"Dear, dear madam! compose yourself! Take time! This dreadful agitation will accelerate the event we are all dreading!" said I.

"No—don't fear. I beg you will go on!—If he should marry again, may he use her—use her—No, no, no!—strike all the last clause out! Give me the pen!" I did as she directed me—struck out from the words, "and if he should," &c. and put the pen into her hand. With trembling fingers she traced the letters of her name; I witnessed it, and she said, "Now, is all right?"—"Yes, madam," I replied. She then burst into a flood of tears, exclaiming, "Oh, George! George! this will show you that, however tired you may have grown of *me*, I have loved you to the end—I have—I have!" She burst into louder weeping. "Oh, it's hard, it's very hard to part with him, though he *might*—he *might* have used me—No!" She paused. I suffered her excited feelings to grow calm; and, after some time spent in endeavouring to soothe her, I took my departure, after witnessing one of the most heart-breaking scenes I have ever encountered. Her husband could not be prevailed on to enter her room that day; but all night long, I was told, he sat outside the door, on one of the steps of the stairs, and more than once startled her with his sighs.

April 14th to May 6th.—Sinking rapidly. I shall be astonished if she survive a week. She is comparatively in a happy frame of mind, and has availed herself of the consolations of religion to happy purpose. On this day (May 6th) I succeeded in extracting from her the facts which compose the former part of this narrative. Her gentle palliating way of telling it, divested the conduct of her husband of almost all blame-worthiness! She would not allow me make a harsh or condemnatory comment all the way through! She censured *herself* as she went on; accused herself of want of firmness; said she was afraid Mr T—— had been disappointed in her disposition; said that if he HAD done any thing wrong, it was owing to the bad companions who had enticed him from the path of duty into that of dissipation; that he had not exactly *neglected* her, or wilfully ill-used her; but—but—'twas all in vain—she could say nothing to extenuate his guilt, and I begged her not! I left her, in tears myself.

O woman! woman! woman! “We had been brutes without you,” and the mean and miserable T—— was a brute *with* you!

May 8th.—Mrs T—— wasted to a shadow: all the horrors of consumption! Her husband, though apparently broken-hearted, cannot, though probably no one will believe it—he *cannot* refrain from frequenting the public-house! He pretends that his spirits are so low, so oppressed, that he requires the aid of stimulating liquors! Mrs T—— made me promise this morning that I would see her coffin closed; and a small locket, containing a portion of her child's and husband's hair, placed next her heart. I nodded acquiescence, for my tongue refused me words. I felt choked.

10th.—I was summoned this evening to witness the exit from our world of one of the sweetest, loveliest spirits, that it was, and is, unworthy of! I was sent for, not under the apprehension that her end was at hand, but on account of some painful symptoms which had manifested themselves since my visit in the morning. It was about nine o'clock when I arrived, and found her in a flow of spirits, very unexpected, and rather unusual in her situation. Her eye was bright, and she could talk with a clearness and rapidity of utterance, to which she had long been a stranger. She told me that she had been awakened from sleep by hearing the sound of sweet singing, which, I need hardly say, was wholly imaginary. She was in a very happy frame of mind; but evidently in a state of dangerous excitement. Her sottish husband was sitting opposite the fire, his face entirely hid in his hands; and he maintained a stupid silence, undisturbed even by my entrance. Mrs T—— thanked me, in almost enthusiastic terms, for my attention to her throughout her illness, and regretted that I would not allow her to testify her sense of it, by leaving me a trifling legacy.

“George—George!” she exclaimed, with sudden and startling energy—an impetuosity of tone which brought him in an instant, with an affrighted air, to the foot of the bed.

“George, I’ve a message FROM HEAVEN for you! Listen—God will never bless you, unless you alter your courses!” The man shrunk and trembled under the burning, overpowering glance of her eye. “Come, dearest,” said she, after a pause, in an altered tone, “come—Doctor——will let you sit beside me for a few mo-

ments!" I removed, and made way for him. She clasped his hand in hers.

"Well, George, we must part!" said she, closing her eyes, and breathing softly, but fast. Her husband sobbed like a child, with his face buried in his handkerchief.—"Do you forgive me?" he murmured, half choked with emotion.

"Yes, dear—dear—dearest husband!—God knows I do, from my heart! I forgive all the little you have ever grieved me about!"

"Oh, Jane—Jane—Jane!" groaned the man, suddenly stooping over the bed, and kissing her lips in an apparent ecstasy. He fell down on his knees, and cried bitterly.

"Rise, George, rise," said his wife, faintly. He obeyed her, and she again clasped his hand in hers.

"George, are you there—are you?" she inquired, in a voice fainter and fainter.

"Here I am, love!—oh, look on me!—look on me!" he sobbed, gazing steadily on her features. "Say once more that you forgive me! Let me hear your dear, blessed voice once again—or—or"——

"I do! Kiss me—kiss me," she murmured, almost inaudibly; and her unworthy—her guilty—husband kissed away the last expiring breath of one of the loveliest and most injured women, whose hearts have been broken by a husband's brutality!

12th.—This evening I looked in at the house where my late patient lay dead, for the purpose of fulfilling my promise, and seeing her locket placed near her heart, and the coffin closed. I then went into the parlour, where sat the bereaved husband, in company with his

clerk, who had, ever since his engagement, showed a deep regard and respect for Mrs T——. After I had sat some moments in their company,—

“ I’ve something on my mind, Mr T——,” said the young man, suddenly, with emotion, “ which I shall not be happy till I’ve told you.”

“ What is it ?” inquired his master, languidly.

“ Do you recollect how often you used to praise my draft-copying, and wondered how I got through so much work ?”

“ Why, yes, curse you, yes !” replied his master, angrily ; “ what have you brought *that* up for now, eh ?”

“ To tell you, sir, that I did not deserve your praises”——

“ Well—well—no more,” interrupted his master, impatiently.

“ But I must, and *will* tell you, that it was all done by poor Mrs T——, who learnt engrossing, and sat up whole nights together, writing, that you might not lose your business, till she was nearly blinded, poor, dear lady ! and she would not ever let me tell you ! But I shall take leave now to say,” continued the young man, rising, and bursting into tears,—“ I shall make free to tell you, that you have behaved shamefully—brutally to her, and have broken her poor heart—you have—and God will remember and curse you for it !”—And he left the room, and never again entered the house, the scene of his beloved mistress’s martyrdom.

Mr T—— listened to all this without uttering a word—his eyes dilated—and he presently burst into a fit of loud and lamentable weeping, which lasted long after I left the house ; and that evening he attempted to com-

mit *suicide*, like one before him, unable to endure the heavy smittings of a guilty conscience.

THIS paper has excited some little attention, and in quarters where I devoutly hope it may be useful. Very many inquiries, also, have been made, as to the veracity of its details. I would to Heaven that, for the honour of humanity, I could say the principal incidents narrated had no other basis than fiction ! I solemnly assure you, reader, that they are true : I tell you, farther, that, to the best of my belief, the wretched husband *still lives* ! More about *him* I cannot—dare not say. There are, *really*, many drafts of pleadings, and leases, &c. now extant, in the handwriting of the amiable and unfortunate lady whose sorrows are recorded above, and which have now met with sympathy, I trust, from thousands. Another incident, which has been considered *improbably* atrocious and brutal—that of pushing down the poor wife, with her refreshments—is also true ; and the Editor farther assures you, reader, that, even were this portion of the narrative fictitious, *he* saw in private life a brutal husband act similarly towards his wife, a beautiful woman, and affectionate wife !

Woe, however, to the man of quick and delicate feeling, that looks closely on even the commonest scenes of life ! How much must he see to shock and wound his heart—to disgust him with his species ! But “the eyes of the *swinish* see not, neither do their hearts feel.”

CHAPTER XVI.

GRAVE DOINGS.

MY gentle reader—start not at learning that I have been, in my time, a RESURRECTIONIST. Let not this appalling word, this humiliating confession, conjure up in your fancy a throng of vampire-like images and associations, or earn your “Physician’s” dismissal from your hearts and hearths. It is your own groundless fears, my fair trembler!—your own superstitious prejudices that have driven me, and will drive many others of my brethren, to such dreadful doings as those hereafter detailed. Come, come—let us have one word of reason between us on the abstract question—and then for my tale. You expect us to cure you of disease, and yet deny us the only means of learning *how*? You would have us bring you the ore of skill and experience, yet forbid us to break the soil, or sink a shaft! Is this fair, *fair* reader? Is this reasonable?

What I am now going to describe was my first and last exploit in the way of body-stealing. It was a grotesque, if not a ludicrous scene, and occurred during the period of my “walking the hospitals,” as it is called.

which occupied the two seasons immediately after my leaving Cambridge. A young, and rather interesting female, was admitted a patient at the hospital I attended; her case baffled all our skill, and her symptoms even defied diagnosis. *Now*, it seemed an enlargement of the heart—now, an ossification—then this, that, and the other; and at last it was plain we knew nothing at all about the matter—no, not even whether her disorder was organic or functional, primary or symptomatic—or whether it *was* really the heart that was at fault. She received no benefit at all under the fluctuating schemes of treatment we pursued, and at length fell into dying circumstances. As soon as her friends were apprized of her situation, and had an inkling of our intention to open the body, they insisted on removing her immediately from the hospital, that she might “die at home.” In vain did Sir —— and his dressers expostulate vehemently with them, and represent in exaggerated terms the imminent peril attending such a step. Her two brothers avowed their apprehension of our designs, and were inflexible in exercising their right of removing their sister. I used all my rhetoric on the occasion; but in vain, and at last said to the young men, “Well, if you are afraid only of our *dissecting* her, we can get hold of her, if we are so disposed, as easily if she die with you, as with us.”

“Well—we’ll *troy* that, measter,” replied the elder, while his Herculean fist oscillated somewhat significantly before my eyes. The poor girl was removed accordingly to her father’s house, which was at a certain village, about five miles from London, and survived her arrival scarcely ten minutes! We soon contrived to

receive intelligence of the event ; and as I and Sir ——'s two dressers had taken great interest in the case throughout, and felt intense curiosity about the real nature of the disease, we met together and entered into a solemn compact, that, come what might, we would have her body out of the ground. A trusty spy informed us of the time, and exact place of the girl's burial ; and on expressing to Sir —— our determination about the matter, he patted me on the back, saying, " Ah, my fine fellow !—IF you have SPIRIT enough—dangerous," &c. &c. Was it not skilfully said ? The Baronet farther told us, he felt himself so curious about the matter, that if fifty pounds would be of use to us in furthering our purpose, they were at our service. It needed not this, nor a glance at the *eclat* with which the successful issue of the affair would be attended among our fellow students, to spur our resolves.

The notable scheme was finally adjusted at my rooms in the Borough. M—— and E——, Sir ——'s dressers, and myself, with an experienced "*grab*," that is to say, a *professional* resurrectionist—were to set off from the Borough about nine o'clock the next evening—which would be the third day after the burial—in a glass coach, provided with all " appliances and means to boot." During the day, however, our friend, the grab, suffered so severely from an overnight's excess, as to disappoint us of his invaluable assistance. This unexpected *contre-temps* nearly put an end to our project ; for the few other grabs we knew, were absent on *professional tours* ! Luckily, however, I bethought me of a poor Irish porter—a sort of " ne'er-do-weel" hanger-on at the hospital, whom I had several times hired to go on errands,

This man I sent for to my rooms, and in the presence of my two coadjutors, persuaded, threatened, and bothered into acquiescence, promising him half-a-guinea for his evening's work—and as much whisky as he could drink prudently. As Mr Tip—that was the name he went by—had some personal acquaintance with the sick grab, he succeeded in borrowing his chief tools ; with which, in a sack large enough to contain our expected prize, he repaired to my rooms about nine o'clock, while the coach was standing at the door. Our Jehu had received a quiet *douceur* in addition to the hire of himself and coach. As soon as we had exhibited sundry doses of Irish cordial to our friend Tip, under the effects of which he became quite “bouncible,” and *ranted* about the feat he was to take a prominent part in—and equipped ourselves in our worst clothes, and white top-coats, we entered the vehicle—four in number—and drove off. The weather had been exceedingly capricious all the evening—moonlight, rain, thunder and lightning, fitfully alternating. The only thing we were anxious about, was the darkness, to shield us from all possible observation. I must own, that in analyzing the feelings that prompted me to undertake and go through with this affair, the mere love of adventure operated quite as powerfully as the wish to benefit the cause of anatomical science. A midnight expedition to the tombs !—It took our fancy amazingly ; and then—Sir ——’s cunning hint about the “danger”—and our “spirit !”

The garrulous Tip supplied us with amusement all the way down—rattle, rattle, rattle, incessantly ; but as soon as we had arrived at that part of the road where we were to stop, and caught sight of —— church, with its hoary

steeple gray—glistening in the fading moonlight, as though it were standing sentinel over the graves around it, one of which we were going so rudely to violate, Tip's spirits began to falter a little. He said little—and that at intervals. To be very candid with the reader, *none* of us felt over much at our ease. Our expedition began to wear a somewhat hairbrained aspect, and to be environed with formidable contingencies which we had not taken sufficiently into our calculations. What, for instance, if the two stout fellows, the brothers, should be out watching their sister's grave? They were not likely to stand on much ceremony with us. And then the manual difficulties! E—— was the only one of us that had ever assisted at the exhumation of a body—and the rest of us were likely to prove but bungling workmen. However, we had gone too far to think of retreating. We none of us *spoke* our suspicions, but the silence that reigned within the coach was tolerably significant. In contemplation, however, of some such contingency, we had put a bottle of brandy in the coach pocket; and before we drew up, had all four of us drunk pretty deeply of it. At length, the coach turned down a by-lane to the left, which led directly to the churchyard wall; and after moving a few steps down it, in order to shelter our vehicle from the observation of highway passengers, the coach stopped, and the driver opened the door.

“Come, Tip,” said I, “out with you.”

“Get out, did you say, sir? To be sure I will—Och! to be sure I will.” But there was small show of alacrity in his movements as he descended the steps; for while I was speaking, I was interrupted by the solemn clangour of the church clock announcing the hour of mid-

night. The sounds seemed to *warn* us against what we were going to do.

“ ’Tis a cowld night, yer honours,” said Tip, in an under tone, as we successively alighted, and stood together, looking up and down the dark lane, to see if any thing was stirring but ourselves. “ ’Tis a cowld night—and—and—and”—he stammered.

“ Why, you cowardly old scoundrel,” grumbled M——, “ are you frightened already? What’s the matter, eh? Hoist up the bag on your shoulders directly, and lead the way down the lane.”

“ Och, but yer honours—och ! by the mother that bore me, but ’tis a murtherous cruel thing, I’m thinking, to wake the poor cratur from her last sleep.” He said this so querulously, that I began to entertain serious apprehensions, after all, of his defection ; so I insisted on his taking a little more brandy, by way of bringing him up to par. It was of no use, however. His reluctance increased every moment—and it even dispirited *us*. I verily believe the turning of a straw would have decided us all on jumping into the coach again, and returning home without accomplishing our errand. Too many of the students, however, were apprized of our expedition, for us to think of terminating it so ridiculously. As it were by mutual consent, we stood and paused a few moments, about half way down the lane. M—— whistled with infinite spirit and distinctness ; E—— remarked to me that he “ always thought a churchyard at midnight was the gloomiest object imaginable ;” and I talked about *business*—“ soon be over”—“ shallow grave,” &c. &c.

“ Confound it—what if those two brothers of hers SHOULD be there?” said M—— abruptly, making a dead stop, and folding his arms on his breast.

“ Powerful fellows, both of them !” muttered E——. We resumed our march—when Tip, our advanced guard—a title he earned by anticipating our steps about three inches—suddenly stood still, let down the bag from his shoulders—elevated both hands in a listening attitude—and exclaimed “ Whisht !—whisht !—By my soul, *what* was that ?” We all paused in silence, looking palely at one another—but could hear nothing except the drowsy flutter of a bat wheeling away from us a little over-head.

“ Fait—an’ wasn’t it somebody *spaking* on the far side o’ the hedge, I heard ?” whispered Tip.

“ Pho—stuff, you idiot !” I exclaimed, losing my temper. “ Come, M—— and E——, it’s high time we had done with all this cowardly nonsense ; and if we mean really to *do* any thing, we must make haste. ’Tis past twelve—day breaks about four—and it is coming on wet, you see.” Several large drops of rain, pattering heavily among the leaves and branches, corroborated my words, by announcing a coming shower, and the air was sultry enough to warrant the expectation of a thunder-storm. We therefore buttoned up our great-coats to the chin, and hurried on to the church-yard wall, which ran across the bottom of the lane. This wall we had to climb over to get into the church-yard, and it was not a very high one. Here Tip annoyed us again. I told him to lay down his bag, mount the wall, and look over into the yard, to see whether all was clear before us ; and, as far as the light would enable him, to look about for a new-made grave. Very reluctantly he complied, and contrived to scramble to the top of the wall. He had hardly time, however, to peer over into the churchyard, when a flut-

tering streak of lightning flashed over us, followed in a second or two by a loud burst of thunder ! Tip fell in an instant to the ground, like a cockchaffer shaken from an elm-tree, and lay crossing himself, and muttering Pater-nosters. We could scarcely help laughing at the manner in which he tumbled down, simultaneously with the flash of lightning. " Now, look ye, gentlemen," said he, still squatting on the ground, " do you mane to give the poor cratur Christian burial, when ye've done wid her ? An' will ye put her back again as ye found her ? 'Case, if you won't, blood an' oons"——

" Hark ye, now, Tip," said I, sternly, taking out one of a brace of *empty* pistols I had put into my great-coat pocket, and presenting it to his head, " we have hired you on this business, for the want of a better, you wretched fellow ! and if you give us any more of this nonsense, by —— I'll send a bullet through your brain ! Do you hear me, Tip ?"

" Och, aisy, aisy wid ye ! don't murther me ! Bad luck to me, that I ever cam wid ye ! Och, and if ivir I live to die, won't I see and bury my ould body out o' the rache of all the docthers in the world ? If I don't, divil burn me !" We all laughed aloud at Tip's truly Hibernian expostulation.

" Come, sir, mount ! over with you !" said we, helping to push him upwards. " Now, drop this bag on the other side," we continued, giving him the sack that contained our implements. We all three of us then followed, and alighted safely in the church-yard. It poured with rain ; and, to enhance the dreariness and horrors of the time and place, flashes of lightning followed in quick succession, shedding a transient awful glare over the scene,

revealing the white tombstones, the ivy-grown venerable church, and our own figures, a shivering group, come on an unhallowed errand ! I perfectly well recollect the lively feelings of apprehension—"the compunctious visitings of remorse"—which the circumstances called forth in my own breast, and which I had no doubt were shared by my companions.

As no time, however, was to be lost, I left the group for an instant under the wall, to search out the grave. The accurate instructions I had received enabled me to pitch on the spot with little difficulty ; and I returned to my companions, who immediately followed me to the scene of operations. We had no umbrellas, and our great coats were saturated with wet ; but the brandy we had recently taken did us good service, by exhilarating our spirits, and especially those of Tip. He untied the sack in a twinkling, and shook out the hoes and spades, &c. ; and taking one of the latter himself, he commenced digging with such energy, that we had hardly prepared ourselves for work, before he had cleared away nearly the whole of the mound. The rain soon abated, and the lightning ceased for a considerable interval, though thunder was heard occasionally grumbling sullenly in the distance, as if expressing anger at our unholy doings—at least I felt it so. The pitchy darkness continued, so that we could scarcely see one another's figures. We worked on in silence, as fast as our spades could be got into the ground ; taking it in turns, two by two, as the grave would not admit of more. On—on—on we worked, till we had hollowed out about three feet of earth. Tip then hastily joined together a long iron screw, or borer, which he thrust into the ground, for

the purpose of ascertaining the depth at which the coffin yet lay from us. To our vexation, we found a distance of three feet remained to be got through. "Sure, and by the soul of St Patrick, but we'll not be done by the morning!" said Tip, as he threw down the instrument, and resumed his spade. We were all discouraged. Oh, how earnestly I wished myself at home, in my snug little bed in the Borough! How I cursed the Quixotism that had led me into such an undertaking! I had no time, however, for reflection, as it was my turn to relieve one of the diggers; so into the grave I jumped, and worked away as lustily as before. While I was thus engaged, a sudden noise, close to our ears, so startled me, that I protest I thought I should have dropped down dead in the grave I was robbing. I and my fellow digger let fall our spades, and all four stood still for a second or two, in an ecstasy of fearful apprehension. We could not see more than a few inches around us, but heard the grass trodden by approaching feet! They proved to be those of an Ass, that was turned at night into the church-yard, and had gone on eating his way towards us; and, while we were standing in mute expectation of what was to come next, opened on us with an astounding hee-haw! hee-haw! hee-haw! Even after we had discovered the ludicrous nature of the interruption, we were too agitated to laugh. The brute was actually close upon us, and had *given tongue* from under poor Tip's elbow, having approached him from behind as he stood leaning on his spade. Tip started suddenly backward against the animal's head, and fell down. Away sprung the jackass, as much confounded as Tip, kicking and scampering like a mad creature among the

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tombstones, and hee-hawing incessantly, as if a hundred devils had got into it for the purpose of discomfiting us. I felt so much fury, and fear lest the noise should lead to our discovery, I could have killed the brute if it had been within my reach, while Tip stammered in an affrighted whisper—"Och, the baste! Och, the baste! The big black divel of a baste! The murtherous thundering"—and a great many epithets of the same sort. We gradually recovered from the agitation which this provoking interruption had occasioned; and Tip, under the promise of two bottles of whisky as soon as we arrived safe at home with our prize, renewed his exertions, and dug with such energy, that we soon cleared away the remainder of the superincumbent earth, and stood upon the bare lid of the coffin. The grapplers, with ropes attached to them, were then fixed in the sides and extremities, and we were in the act of raising the coffin, when the sound of a human voice, accompanied with footsteps, fell on our startled ears. We heard both distinctly, and crouched down close over the brink of the grave, awaiting in breathless suspense a corroboration of our fears. After a pause of two or three minutes, however, finding that the sounds were not renewed, we began to breathe freer, persuaded that our ears must have deceived us. Once more we resumed our work, succeeded in hoisting up the coffin—not without a slip, however, which nearly precipitated it down again to the bottom, with all four of us upon it—and depositing it on the grave side. Before proceeding to use our screws, or wrenchers, we once more looked and listened, and listened and looked; but neither seeing nor hearing any thing, we set to work, prized off the lid in a twinkling, and a transient glimpse of moonlight disclosed to us the

shrouded inmate—all white and damp. I removed the face-cloth, and unpinned the cap, while M—— loosed the sleeves from the wrists. Thus were we engaged, when E——, who had hold of the feet, ready to lift them out, suddenly let them go—gasped—“ Oh, my God ! there they are ! ” and placed his hand on my arm. He shook like an aspen leaf. I looked towards the quarter whither his eyes were directed, and, sure enough, saw the figure of a man—if not two—moving stealthily towards us. “ Well, we’re discovered, that’s clear,” I whispered as calmly as I could. “ We shall be murdered ! ” groaned E——. “ Lend me one of the pistols you have with you,” said M——, resolutely ; “ By ——, I’ll have a shot for my life, however ! ” As for poor Tip, who had heard every syllable of this startling colloquy, and himself seen the approaching figures, he looked at me in silence, the image of blank horror ! I could have laughed even then, to see his staring black eyes—his little cocked ruby-tinted nose—his chattering teeth. “ Hush—hush ! ” said I, cocking my pistol, while M—— did the same ; for none but myself knew that they were unloaded. To add to our consternation, the malignant moon withdrew the small scantling of light she had been doling out to us, and sank beneath a vast cloud, “ black as Erebus,” but not before we had caught a glimpse of two more figures moving towards us in an opposite direction. “ Surrounded ! ” two of us muttered in the same breath. We all rose to our feet, and stood together, not knowing what to do—unable in the darkness to see one another distinctly. Presently we heard a voice say, in a subdued tone, “ Where are they ? where ? *Sure* I saw them ! Oh, there they are ! Halloa—halloa ! ”

That was enough—the signal for our flight. With-

out an instant's pause, or uttering another syllable, off we sprung like small-shot from a gun's mouth, all of us in different directions, we knew not whither. I heard the report of a gun—mercy on me ! and pelted away, scarcely knowing what I was about, dodging among the graves,—now coming full-butt against a plaguy tombstone, then stumbling on the slippery grass—while some one followed close at my heels panting and puffing, but whether friend or foe, I knew not. At length I stumbled against a large tombstone ; and finding it open at the two ends, crept under it, resolved there to abide the issue. At the moment of my ensconcing myself, the sound of the person's footsteps who had followed me suddenly ceased. I heard a splashing sound, then a kicking and scrambling, a faint stifled cry of, “ Ugh—oh—ugh ! ” and all was still. Doubtless it must be one of my companions, who had been wounded. What could I do, however ? I did not know in what direction he lay—the night was pitch-dark—and if I crept from my hiding-place, for all I knew, I might be shot myself. I shall never forget that hour—no, never ! There was I, squatting like a toad on the wet grass and weeds, not daring to do more than breathe ! Here was a predicament ! I could not conjecture how the affair would terminate. Was I to lie where I was till daylight, that then I might step into the arms of my captors ? What was become of my companions ?—While turning these thoughts in my mind, and wondering that all was so quiet, my ear caught the sound of the splashing of water, apparently at but a yard or two's distance, mingled with the sounds of a half-smothered human voice—“ Ugh ! ugh ! Och, murther ! Murther ! murther ! ”—another

splash,—“ and isn’t it dead and drowned and kilt I am ! ”——

Whew! *Tip* in trouble, thought I, not daring to speak. Yes—it was poor *Tip*, I afterwards found—who had followed at my heels, scampering after me as fast as fright could drive him, till his career was unexpectedly ended by his tumbling—souse—head over heels, into a newly opened grave in his path, with more than a foot of water in it. There the poor fellow remained, after recovering from the first shock of his fall, not daring to utter a word for some time, lest he should be discovered—straddling over the water with his toes and elbows stuck into the loose soil on each side, to support him. This was his interesting position, as he subsequently informed me, at the time of uttering the sounds which first attracted my attention. Though not aware of his situation at the time, I was almost choked with laughter as he went on with his soliloquy, somewhat in this strain :—

“ Och, *Tip*, ye ould divel ! Don’t it sarve ye right, ye fool ? Ye villanous ould coffin robber ! Won’t ye burn for this hereafter, ye sinner ? Ulaloo ! When ye are didd yourself, may ye be trated like that poor cratur—and yourself alive to see it ! Och, hubbaboo ! hubbaboo ! Isn’t it sure that I’ll be drowned, an’ then it’s kilt I’ll be ! ”—a loud splash and a pause for a few moments, as if he were readjusting his footing—“ Och ! an’ I’m catching my dith of cowl ! Fait, an’ it’s a divel a drop o’ the two bottles o’ whisky I’ll iver see—Och, och, och ! ”—another splash—“ Och, an’ isn’t this uncomfortable ! Murther and oons !—if iver I come out of this—sha’nt I be dead before I do ? ”

“ *Tip—Tip—Tip !* ” I whispered, in a low tone. There

was a dead silence. "Tip, Tip, where are you? What's the matter, eh?"—No answer; but he muttered in a low tone to himself—"Where am I! by my soul! Isn't it dead, and kilt, and drowned, and murdered I am—that's all!"

"Tip—Tip—Tip!" I repeated, a little louder.

"Tip, indeed! Fait, ye may call, bad luck to ye— whoever ye are—but it's divel a word I'll be after spakin' to ye."

"Tip, you simpleton! It's I—Mr ——."

In an instant there was a sound of jumping and splashing, as if surprise had made him slip from his standing again, and he called out, "Whoo! whoo! an' is't you, sweet Mr ——! What is the matter wid ye? Are ye kilt? Where are they all? Have they taken ye away, every mother's son of you?" he asked eagerly, in a breath.

"Why, what are *you* doing, Tip? Where are *you*?"

"Fait, an' it's being *washed* I am, in the feet, and in the qucerest *tub* your honour ever saw!"—A noise of scuffling, not many yards off, silenced us both in an instant. Presently I distinguished the voice of E——, calling out—"Help, M——!" (my name)—"Where are you?" The noise increased, and seemed nearer than before. I crept from my lurking place, and aided at Tip's resurrection, when both of us hurried towards the spot whence the sound came. By the faint moonlight, I could just see the outlines of two figures violently struggling and grappling together. Before I could come up to them, both fell down locked in each other's arms, rolling over each other, grasping one another's collars, gasping and panting as if in mortal struggle. The moon

suddenly emerged, and who do you think, reader, was E——'s antagonist? Why, the person whose appearance had so discomfited and affrighted us all—OUR COACHMAN. That worthy individual, alarmed at our protracted stay, had, contrary to our injunctions, left his coach to come and search after us. He it was whom we had seen stealing towards us; his steps—his voice had alarmed us, for he could not see us distinctly enough to discover whether we were his fare or not. He was on the point of whispering my name it seems, when we must all have understood one another—when, lo, we all started off in the manner which has been described; and he himself, not knowing that he was the reason of it, had taken to his heels, and fled for his life! He supposed we had fallen into a sort of ambuscade. He happened to hide himself behind the tombstone next but one to that which sheltered E——. Finding all quiet, he and E——, as if by mutual consent, were groping from their hiding places, when they unexpectedly fell foul of one another—each too affrighted to speak—and hence the scuffle.

After this satisfactory denouement, we all repaired to the grave's mouth, and found the corpse and coffin precisely as we had left them. We were not many moments in taking out the body, stripping it, and thrusting it into the sack we had brought. We then tied the top of the sack, carefully deposited the shroud, &c. in the coffin, re-screwed down the lid—fearful—impious mockery!—and consigned it once more to its resting place—Tip scattering a handful of earth on the lid, and exclaiming reverently,—“An' may the Lord forgive us

for what we have done to ye ! The coachman and I then took the body between us to the coach, leaving M——, and E——, and Tip, to fill up the grave.

Our troubles were not yet ended, however. Truly it seemed as though Providence were throwing every obstacle in our way. Nothing went right ! On reaching the spot where we had left the coach, behold it lay several yards farther in the lane, tilted into the ditch—for the horses, being hungry, and left to themselves, in their anxiety to graze on the verdant bank of the hedge, had contrived to overturn the vehicle in the ditch—and one of the horses was kicking vigorously when we came up—his whole body off the ground, and resting on that of his companion. We had considerable difficulty in righting the coach, as the horses were inclined to be obstreperous. We succeeded, however—deposited our unholy spoil within, turned the horses' heads towards the high-road, and then, after enjoining Jehu to keep his place on the box, I went to see how my companions were getting on. They had nearly completed their task, and told me that “shovelling *in*, was surprisingly easier than shovelling *out* !” We took great pains to leave every thing as neat, and as nearly resembling what we found it, as possible, in order that our visit might not be suspected. We then carried away each our own tools, and hurried as fast as possible to our coach, for the dim twilight had already stolen a march upon us, devoutly thankful that, after so many interruptions, we had succeeded in effecting our object.

It was broad daylight before we reached town—and a wretched coach company we looked—all wearied and dirty—Tip especially, who nevertheless snored in the

corner as comfortably as if he had been warm in his bed. I heartily resolved, with him, on leaving the coach, that it should be “the divel’s own dear self only that should timpt me out agin *body-snatching* !” *

* On examining the body, we found that Sir ——’s suspicions were fully verified. It was disease of the heart—but of too complicated a nature to be made intelligible to general readers. I never heard that the girl’s friends discovered our doings ; and, for all they know, she is now mouldering away in —— churchyard ; whereas, in point of fact, her bleached skeleton adorns ——’s surgery ; and a preparation of her *heart* enriches ——’s museum !

END OF VOLUME FIRST.



